

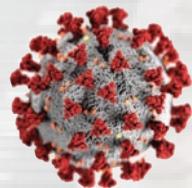


Armenia

NEWS



LIV 2
April-May-June
2020



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COVID-19 REVELATIONS
By Susan Jerian, M.D. - Story Page 4



AMAA NEWS

is a publication of
The Armenian Missionary Association of America
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(ISSN 1097-0924)

The AMAA is a tax-exempt, not for profit organization under IRS Code Section 501(c)(3)

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DESIGN

Caspianseal.com

NAMEPLATE Yearbook, Inc.

PRINTING:
Printsolutions.info
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Background photo: Empty Brooklyn Bridge during the coronavirus outbreak in New York City (Eduardo Munoz/Reuters)

Top corner: Social Distancing

Bottom Corner: Doctors treat a COVID-19 patient in Armenia (armradio.am)

The MISSION in the Era of COVID-19

Perfect love casts out all fear.

1 John 4:18

By Zaven Khanjian, AMAA Executive Director/CEO

Ten days after September 11, 2001, at a special State of the Union Address, President George W. Bush told the nation "It is my hope that in the months and years ahead, life will return almost to normal."

It never did!

Not even 'almost' to normal.

The terrorist attack on September 11, 2001 set in motion a series of new policies, legislation and attitude that dramatically changed American life, is here to stay and has made us forget what life was like before.

Airline travel, airport security, Orwellian surveillance, intelligence, banking, border crossing, immigration and deportation, the longest war in American history, big government, exploding national debt, and US sanctions are spheres of life radically impacted.

Since December 2019, the heartbreakingly consuming fallout of the global pandemic called COVID-19 is consuming the human mind and soul and has been emotionally and physically draining for the global communities.

A safety and health assault by an unknown enemy has forged an unparalleled, unprecedented and unimaginable reality dictating new norms of life.

(AMAA News is gratified to present a timely and insightful article on the pandemic titled "COVID-19 REVELATIONS," and authored by former AMAA Board member, analytical commentator and medical professional Dr. Susan Jerian. We thank Dr. Jerian for this invaluable contribution to the AMAA News on pages 4-10).

The human loss and suffering, including that in the United States, is grave under any measured scale, as we continue to face an uncertain, unknown and blurry future.

While our 'ground hog days' may be boring and our urge to be liberated from the lockdown pushes us to the brink of impatience, they help us to think of all those communities around the world where there is no governmental support, stimulus package, personal protective equipment, adequate medical and health personnel and facilities or professional first respondents. Communities where war is still lingering, inflation is sky rocketing, unemployment records are broken, layoffs are abundant, businesses are bankrupt and, following a liquidity crunch, bank account holders are unable to withdraw or utilize hard earned personal nest eggs.

Poverty is devastating. Children and minors are the primary victims. Their health, nutrition and education are at stake. Their destiny is our yoke. The fate of our future ministers, educators, doctors, scientists, musicians, engineers and artisans is in our hands. We cannot afford to shatter their dreams.

What the future will change in life on this planet as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic is anybody's guess.

I don't have a prediction like President Bush.

But I know that now is the time to change the future of those God has yoked us to dignify and uphold.

AMAA's COVID-19 Response Fund is knocking on the doors. We are all invited to show the "***perfect love that will cast out all fear.***"

We thank you for your support and may God bless you and your families during this most unpredictable time. □





COVID-19 Revelations

By Susan Jerian, M.D.*

...I've never ever had the experience in my life, nor could I have ever imagined how difficult it was, between the fevers and shortness of breath and the sense that I was drowning. There was this overwhelming sense of doom that ultimately wound up in my transfer to the ICU...

- Dr. Arnold Weg, Physician who has COVID-19, April 19, 2020 CNN interview

The COVID-19 pandemic is an event of global proportions. A microscopic virus spreads among us by exploiting the very essence of our humanness: our deep need and desire to be with each other as social beings. We are all witnesses and participants in this story. It is a moment of mixed emotions and great uncertainty. How do we respond to the challenges in front of us?

As I write this, most states and countries are still in some form of restricted movement or "lockdown." Most understand that the purpose is to prevent the healthcare system from being overwhelmed, resulting in a collapse that would lead to much higher fatality rates. However, the lockdown is starting to take a significant economic and psychological toll on everyone. There is a point at which we could not only have virus related "toxicity", but also financial and social toxicity. Navigating the narrows between these is proving to be challenging for even the most developed and wealthy nations and terrifying for the least developed and poorest.



Most people have learned to track the COVID numbers on various websites. To mark the situation today, April 28, 2020, here are the numbers (Table 1) that you can compare to the numbers reported on the day that you are reading this (ref <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/map.html> and www.worldometers.info):

Table 1. COVID-19 cases and deaths from Johns Hopkins University Dashboard and Worldometers (04/28/20)

Events	Worldwide	USA	Armenia	New York	California
COVID cases confirmed	3,114,659	1,012,517	1,867	301,450	46,163
COVID deaths	217,132	58,356	30	23,114	1,862
Deaths per million people in the population overall	28	179	10	1,180	48

We rest in the hope that by working together we will find our way forward. But collaborations do not come easy, opinions are abundant and varied and leadership is often lacking. Mechanisms of coping include truly altruistic acts, selfless giving, good humor, compassion, hard work, exercise and rejuvenation, and bringing special gifts and talents to the situation. Sometimes, though, it means allowing oneself the space to breakdown, vent, become vulnerable, maybe even have a small panic attack from time to time. At any time, we may be experiencing one of more of Kubler-Ross's stages of loss: denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. But for many, what gets them through this difficult time more than anything, is their faith, knowing that they are loved by God, that there is a Comforter and that nothing can take that away. In short there is HOPE.

What follows is a two-part report. Part I provides information about COVID-19 as background. It is a primer for non-medical people. Part II is called "Revelations" and provides observations about how this historic moment may be an opportunity for us to see things about our world that were previously hidden. It is as if a light is shining brightly on all and revealing what was not seen in the dark. Perhaps they were always there, but we lacked awareness. Or perhaps we were aware at some point, but chose to set them aside. As the pandemic continues and shines its light on the world, no doubt, more things will be revealed.

Acknowledgements: Thank you to Zaven Khanjian who invited me to submit this article, to my husband, David Essayan, who is my rock, muse and inspiration in all things, and to friends who provided ideas and insights that became incorporated in the creation of this article: Mihr Toumajan (Armenian Assembly), Jason Sohigian (Armenia Tree Project), Gaiane Khachatrian (American University of Armenia), and Mary Scott.

PART I: COVID-19 BACKGROUND

What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 stands for "COronaVIrus Disease 2019" and was named after the virus that causes the disease (novel coronavirus) and the year in which it was first documented in humans.

The virus that causes COVID-19 is called **SARS-CoV-2** which stands for "Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome CoronaVirus 2". This reflects the nature of the disease it causes in humans (lung involvement) and the fact that this is the second SARS virus to do so; you may recall the SARS epidemic of 2002-3, which was caused by the SARS-CoV-1 virus.

SARS-CoV-2 is only about 100 nanometers in diameter (which is one ten millionth of a meter). It is an RNA virus that has no DNA; it cannot replicate on its own, meaning it cannot make copies of itself. In order to propagate, it must find and invade a host cell (in this case, a human or animal cell) and use the host cell's machinery to make copies of itself. Without a host, it will not survive. Those virus copies made in the host can then infect other cells to make more virus, which gets into body fluids and tissues, which then infect other humans.

COVID-19 is not like the flu. It is a different beast entirely. There are 3 buckets of severity of COVID-19. Many people infected with COVID-19 have died or develop critical illnesses, and the nature of the illnesses has taken healthcare experts by surprise in character and severity. Most shocking is how quickly some patients deteriorate due to failure of their organs (lungs, heart, kidneys) or due to excessive blood clotting leading to strokes. The next bucket includes people who have moderate to significant symptoms including high fevers, dry cough, shaking chills, diarrhea, loss of sense of taste or smell, significant muscle aches and pains all over the body, mood changes, decreased urination, and a profound sense of malaise and fatigue. The third bucket includes people who have become infected and have no symptoms or only minor symptoms that do not interfere with their daily life; we call them asymptomatic or mild cases. As of today, we do not know what proportion of patients fall into each of these 3 buckets, because we do not yet have the level of testing capability necessary to determine that. For that reason, we cannot accurately calculate the case fatality rates, the infectivity rates, or the prevalence.



Armenia frontline workers screen people for fever, a symptom of COVID-19 (photo Hayk Baghdasaryan - bloomberg.com).

How does the virus spread so efficiently?

A successful virus is one that evolves to spread from host to host without the host knowing that they are ill, is able to replicate rapidly in the host and causes host symptoms (coughing, sneezing) that assist with spreading the disease; ideally, it can also spread between species to diversify the host pool. SARS-CoV-2 is a very successful virus in that it is able to spread between species (bat to human or bat to intermediate species to human), is able to replicate rapidly without making the host ill initially and is able to survive in body fluids that can spread with close contact or in the air.

How does SARS-CoV-2 cause disease?

To understand the disease, we can look at what types of cells the virus infects and how the human body responds to the infection. SARS-CoV-2 has a spike protein that it uses to bind to ACE2 (angiotensin-converting enzyme 2), a protein that is on the surface of many different human cells. By understanding where ACE2 exists in the body, we can start to understand how COVID-19 infects and harms the person infected. We know ACE2 exists in the nose, mouth, upper airway, lower airway (lungs), heart, intestines, liver, kidneys, brain, endothelial cells that line blood vessels, and testes (Hamming I, et al J. Pathol, 2004 Jun;203(2)). The virus can theoretically do damage in all of these tissues. But that is not all. Part of what makes a person feel so ill is a result of the human immune system's response to the virus. The immune system recognizes the virus as something that should not be there and starts attacking it. In the process of attacking the virus, the immune response causes powerful proteins to be secreted that not only help the immune cells eliminate the virus, but also cause collateral damage to the organs where the virus is located and in some cases, cause collateral damage throughout the body. It is the combination of the virus attacking human cells and the immune system attacking the virus that causes the symptoms and, in some people, is what leads to failure of the lungs and other organs. Essentially, there is a "war" going on inside the infected person. The objective is to prevent that "war" from killing the person.

How can we treat COVID-19?

Right now, all we can do is provide supportive medical measures and conduct clinical research to test various experimental medications and procedures. There are different strategies both for stopping the virus and for reducing the collateral damage from the

immune response, while at the same time trying not to suppress the immune response too much. There are also different approaches for getting oxygen into the blood stream in the face of diseased or failing lungs. The most critical part of COVID-19 treatment is conducting clinical trials to determine which interventions work and which do not. In the USA, there is a government website www.clinicaltrials.gov which lists all the clinical trials in humans occurring in the USA and beyond. As of April 28, 2020, there are 997 clinical research trials for COVID-19 testing medicines, vaccines, procedures and test kits. We can all take great hope in knowing that thousands of people are working hard to discover the best treatments, and we hope to hear news of successes soon.

How can we prevent COVID-19?

SARS-CoV-2 virus is brand new to humans; therefore, no one has immunity. Because it is so infectious and because it can cause serious and fatal disease in some people, it is seen as a serious problem. The only tool we have right now to prevent it is to keep people physically separate from each other to stop the virus from spreading. In the future, we may have a vaccine that can be used to prevent COVID-19, but the scientific process to develop the vaccine takes time, and the manufacturing process to make enough vaccine for everyone takes time. There are many challenges to develop a vaccine for coronaviruses, and previous experience trying to develop vaccines for other coronaviruses, namely SARS-CoV-1 and MERS, have not been successful. That said, there are tremendous resources being invested in the development of a safe and effective vaccine.



Social distancing: Elementary school students from the Avedisian School attend class on-line.



COVID-19 Prevention: At the Armenian Evangelical Bethel Church of Aleppo the community learns about the basics of COVID-19 prevention - social distancing and wearing masks.

PART II: THE REVELATIONS

Revelation #1: COVID-19 is a pandemic that was predicted, and we were not prepared.

Infectious diseases occur throughout nature and affect humans, animals and plants. A pandemic is a disease that has spread across multiple countries and continents, affecting substantial numbers of people and that demonstrates increased and sustained spread in the general population (person to person spread).

In the case of COVID-19, the current scientific DNA analyses indicate that SARS-CoV-2 originated in bats in Asia and jumped from bats to humans where the virus found a receptive host in which to propagate and efficiently spread. The result is that COVID-19 is now a pandemic.

Many had predicted a COVID-19- like pandemic based on scientific modelling. With each pandemic over the last century we have learned more and more about how they develop and how to manage them. Table 2 is a timeline of recent pandemics (ref: CDC):

Table 2. Pandemics spanning the 20th and 21st centuries

Year	Disease	Deaths (Global)	Continent of Origin
1918-1919	Spanish Flu (H1N1)	40-50,000,000	North America
1957-1958	Asian Flu (H2N2)	1,100,000	Asia
1968-1970	Hong Kong Flu (H3N2)	1,000,000	Asia
1981-present	HIV/AIDS	25-35,000,000	Africa
2002-2003	SARS (SARS-CoV-1)	774	Asia
2009-2010	Swine Flu (H1N1)	151-575,400	North America
2012-present	MERS (MERS-CoV)	858	Middle East
2014-2016	Ebola (Ebolavirus)	11,372	Africa

Over twenty years ago, the United States government had predicted that by 2020 a pandemic such as COVID-19 would occur. In January 2000, the National Intelligence Report entitled "The Global Infectious Disease Threat and its Implications for the United States" was issued. The key conclusion of the report is summarized in its first sentence:

"New and reemerging infectious diseases will pose a rising global health threat and will complicate US and global security over the next 20 years. These diseases will endanger US citizens at home and abroad, threaten US armed forces deployed overseas, and exacerbate social and political instability in key countries and regions in which the United States has significant interests."

The report goes on to predict:

"Influenza now kills some 30,000 Americans annually, and epidemiologists generally agree that it is not a question of whether, but when, the next killer pandemic will occur."

Pandemics were viewed as a national security threat in 2000. Among the predictions made by the government were the following: 1) at least 170,000 Americans would die each year to emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases and that number could increase substantially if a yet unknown pandemic respiratory disease emerged, 2) our military could be significantly impacted with more injuries and deaths due to infection than due to battle, 3) socio-economic development would be slowed, and 4) travel bans and embargoes would create friction between countries.

Shortly after this report, we experienced the SARS pandemic in 2002-3.

In December 2008, the US National Intelligence Council issued another report: "Strategic Implications of Global Health". Among the conclusions of this report were the following:

"Highly publicized virulent infectious diseases—including HIV/AIDS, a potential influenza pandemic, and "mystery" illnesses such as the 2003 outbreak of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS)—remain the most direct health-related threats to the United States..."

This also proved to be prescient as new pandemics popped up shortly thereafter, namely Swine Flu, Ebola, and MERS. After the experience with Swine Flu, for which the US was not well prepared, heavy investments were made to combat Ebola and MERS and those investments paid off in protecting our country and helping contain and treat these diseases.

In January 2017, the National Intelligence Council Report "Global Trends: Paradox of Progress" was issued. Due to crises and advances that had ensued over the prior 16 years, the authors shifted their thinking and took a new approach. They recognized that in our interconnected world, health, security, economics and social factors are so intimately intertwined that a new approach was needed:

"We are living a paradox: The achievements of the industrial and information ages are shaping a world to come that is both more dangerous and richer with opportunity than ever before. Whether promise or peril prevails will turn on the choices of humankind."

From this vantage, they identified 7 global trends (2017-2035) with the 7th being Health:

"Human and animal health will increasingly be interconnected. Increasing global connectivity and changing environmental conditions will affect the geographic distribution of pathogens and their hosts, and, in turn, the emergence, transmission, and spread of many human and animal infectious diseases. Unaddressed deficiencies in national and global health systems for disease control will make infectious disease outbreaks more difficult to detect and manage, increasing the potential for epidemics to break out far beyond their points of origin."

It is hard to invest in preventing something that has not yet happened, especially when that "thing" is not a force with which we can negotiate or reason. Despite all these predictions by the government, funding in the US for pandemic preparedness dropped more than 50% (corrected for inflation) between 2003 and 2020. As a result, in 2020 we were operating at a considerable handicap.

Preparedness is a challenging subject and it is hard to know if we are doing it effectively since we are preparing for something that is unknown. The Global Health Security Index report published October 2019 was a joint effort by the Nuclear Threat Initiative, Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security and the Economist Intelligence Unit. This initiative assessed 195 countries for their preparedness for an infectious disease pandemic based on 6 factors: Prevention, Detection and Reporting, Rapid Response, Health System, Compliance with International Norms and Risk Environment. The overall finding of their research was that:

"National Health Security is fundamentally weak around the world. No country is fully prepared for epidemics or pandemics, and every country has important gaps to address...Countries are not prepared for a globally catastrophic biological event, including those that could be caused by the international spread of a new or emerging pathogen or by the deliberate or accidental release of a dangerous or engineered agent or organism."

Two months later, COVID-19 arrived in Wuhan, China.

The Global Health Security Index scored countries on a 0-100 scale with 100 being a perfect score. The United States scored 83.5/100 and was ranked #1 out of 195; Armenia scored 50.2/100 and was ranked #44. Interestingly, Armenia has a lower number of deaths per million population (10) and is faring better than the US (179) despite the Global Health Security Index predictions (Table 1). Armenia has instituted smart measures in an organized fashion and with a compassionate intent. In addition to stay at home orders, they have hospitals solely dedicated to COVID-19 to help with containment. They repatriated Armenians who were in Iran, Italy, Russia and other countries in an organized and considered fashion to minimize spread of COVID-19. They instituted testing efficiently.



Nork Infectious Disease Hospital, a dedicated facility for COVID-19 patients, builds new wing in just a few days. (eurasianet.org - photo: Facebook, Arsen Torosyan) <https://www.facebook.com/investinarmenia1/videos/206897670605492/>

Another aspect of preparedness is the quality of management. From 2000-2016 in the US, the strategy and expertise to coordinate a response to a biological threat such as COVID-19 resided in the National Security Council, with a dedicated leader who would coordinate the response through the White House; this was important because it meant that the President would be fully engaged and there would be a point person who was fully dedicated to coordinating the many moving parts of such a response. In addition, infectious disease threats were traditionally part of the National Security Strategy. However, the latest National Security Strategy of the United States, released December 18, 2017, focused on military and economic threats and did not include infectious disease threats. It focused on ramping up military, weaponry, and economic might. Unfortunately, none of the expensive, high-tech new weaponry can combat COVID-19. In 2018, the new National Biodefense Strategy was issued, and it was quite comprehensive. It built on experience from the last 20 years, but it suffered two handicaps: Lack of adequate funding and mismanagement. Unlike past administrations, the leadership role was removed from the National Security Council and was given to the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) since it was viewed narrowly as a medical issue primarily. The DHHS Secretary has multiple major responsibilities including oversight of NIH (National Institute of Health), FDA (Food and Drug Administration), CMS (Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services) and CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), but in a pandemic, multiple Agencies such as FEMA, Homeland Security, Commerce, Agriculture, Treasury, Army Corps of Engineers and others need to be involved. The lack of funding and the structural management changes left us vulnerable and unprepared. These decisions would prove to be a mistake.

Revelation #2: "Essential" has new meaning.

Crises focus the mind. What might otherwise appear as many choices and pathways suddenly is distilled down to what is essential. In this time of COVID-19, we are learning what is essential. To stop the spread, we need to stay "safe at home" except for essential activities regarding food or healthcare. Essential workers were identified as those who worked at the essential services that keep our society safe: Certain food industry workers, first responders, healthcare workers, utility workers, garbage collectors, janitors, certain financial industry workers, government workers and others. How often have we taken for granted, these services?

Along with this came the identification of what and who was considered non-essential: Elective medical procedures, dine-in restaurants, amusement parks, sporting events, concerts, graduations, in-school attendance (now all virtual), and any event where more than 10-50 people gathered together. Non-essential is not a good designation for these goods and services that enhance our lives and help us to flourish as a society. It will be interesting to see what happens when we roll back some of the restrictions to see how people view those "non-essential" things. Which will people continue to seek out and which will be seen as not worthwhile?

Countries also have demonstrated different levels of commitment to ensuring employment as an essential aspect of their citizens' lives. When COVID-19 hit, the real unemployment rate in the US soared from low single digits to high double digits and may well pass 20%; this hearkens to the unemployment rates of the Great Recession and Depression. The economic relief Bill that was ultimately passed by Congress came late and is not sufficient and not well managed; in short, many of those who have significant need are not receiving funds while those with much less need (well-endowed Universities, large corporations) are receiving funds (O'Connell et al May 1, 2020). However, a different outcome is seen in Europe where job protections were already part of the economic infrastructure and decisions were made to subsidize wages and prevent joblessness; in many EU countries the magnitude of increase in unemployment is significantly blunted (Birnbaum, M April 11, 2020). In Armenia, measures similar to those in Europe are being undertaken, but Armenia is not a wealthy country and there is a limit to what it can provide. Nonetheless, it has made decisions about what is essential. What will we learn about the resiliency of the different economic systems?

Most importantly, there are the essentials of the joy of life and being human. While we sit in our homes and places of refuge, we are considering what is essential in life: Human touch and interaction, Faith, Love and Peace. There is a story about a young boy whose mother, a doctor, had to move out of the house so as not to infect her family. In his innocence, he captured the essentials of his relationship with his mother when he said, "I would rather die than not hug you, Mom." How many of us have felt that? It does not matter how much or little we have in the way of material things, what matters is showing love to our family and friends.

Revelation #3: The Great Leaders (and Poor Leaders) are Revealed.

Leadership is tested through adversity. Some leaders are revealed to be great and rise up in a crisis. Some we thought were strong, become cowed. Some become unmoored and create chaos. Some with evil intentions take advantage of the situation for their own selfish motivations. COVID-19 is shining a light on leaders all over the world.



Despite COVID-19, AMAA's Soup Kitchen in Yerevan, Armenia prepares food and delivers it to the homes of the elderly.

In the US, we are seeing both great leaders rise up and chaotic leaders spin around. We are seeing selfish leaders take advantage of the situation. And we are seeing compassion and selflessness like we have not seen in decades. We are seeing clear-headed rational thinking leaders and confused leaders.

In Armenia, we are seeing leaders rising to the challenge and being quite successful. We cheer them on in their dedication and determination. Many Diaspora organizations have played a role in supporting Armenia and Artsakh and the visible success and competence of Armenia in the face of this crisis further strengthens those bonds.

In Germany, we see logical and rational assessment and actions that are resulting in great success.

In Italy, we saw hubris, then shock, panic and mourning followed by focus, determination, sacrifice and the beginnings of recovery.

In various parts of the world, we see leaders trying to take advantage of the situation to expand their control and authority.

In refugee camps where millions lie in wait, we see a leadership vacuum and a global tragedy about to unfold. Who will step in to help when everyone is focused internally on their own country's needs?

Revelation #4: The Earth is Benefiting from the Great Pause.

Another name for this time of COVID is "The Great Pause." This is when the people of Earth stopped. We stopped nearly all forms of travel (air, water, train, and greatly reduced car). We stopped going to work, except for people needed to ensure adequate resources, safety and healthcare. We stopped gathering in groups. We stopped shopping for fun and now just shop for necessity. Many stopped having a job and an income. And in the midst of this Great Pause, we are witnesses to the Earth healing itself. Who cannot be impacted by the rapidity with which the Earth is working to undo the environmental abuses of humans? The air and water are cleaner. The animals are reclaiming their historic territory. Even the seismologists have noted that the Earth has had a noticeable and measurable reduction in vibrations of its crust. Scientists have been measuring air pollution levels this past month and comparing them to this time last year, noting dramatic improvements.

It is predicted that in 2020 there will be a greater than 6% drop in greenhouse gas emissions, perhaps reaching the annual target of 7.6% that we need to achieve to slow down climate change. What will we take away from this experience and magnitude of the impact of human behavior on our planet? How will we address it?

The Armenia Tree Project is an organization that has been working to enhance environmental preservation and recovery for many years and is poised to do more and be available to the community. They have shown that through education and collaborations with other Armenian and non-Armenian organizations, they can magnify their impact. This can be a model for others.

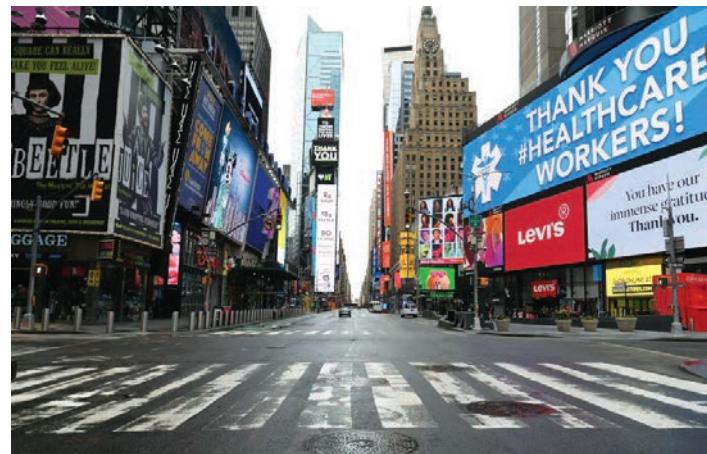
Revelation #5: Our way of life leaves us vulnerable.

While there is little doubt that the lockdown efforts are saving hundreds of thousands, if not millions of lives and preventing societal collapse, there will still be significant financial toxicity from which we will all have to recover over the ensuing decade. As the crisis unfolds, we can see which countries and economic structures have been most resilient in the face of COVID-19. Traditional ways of stopping an enemy do not work with COVID-19. One cannot reason or negotiate with it. It cannot be attacked with ballistic weapons. It cannot be voted out of office. It cannot be fired. It spreads like a wildfire, but invisibly. It knows our vulnerabilities, yet we are ignorant of its weaknesses. It pays no heed to national boundaries, geographic borders, race, ethnicity, political parties, religion, intelligence, education, age, or economic status. Everyone is susceptible.

The US is having a particularly difficult time in this realm. Our disjointed, free market healthcare system is sluggish and unsustainable in this type of a crisis. It has been difficult to care for both COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 medical needs at the same time. Those people with chronic medical conditions and who have not been able to afford good healthcare seem to be particularly vulnerable to SARS-CoV-2. The underlying economy is not as resilient as we thought. The Debt:GDP ratio is rising rapidly and is soon to eclipse the peaks seen at the end of WWII. In December 2019 it was 107% (pre-COVID), making it the highest in the western hemisphere and the 11th highest in the world leaving no buffer; by the end of 2020 is predicted to be significantly higher. Economic innovation has been lacking.

Countries dependent on oil as their primary source of income are seeing a history making tragedy as the price of oil dropped to negative values (below \$0/barrel). With the plummeting demand and price war between Russia and Middle East Gulf states, this has become a combined natural and man-made disaster.

Countries with deficits in manufacturing are seeing COVID-19 shine a spotlight on those gaps. In the US, we have been stunned by our inability to make and acquire personal protective equipment for essential workers and ventilators for patients. It is predicted that



"The Great Pause" - New York's Times Square (Photo: Angela Weiss - AFP/Getty Images - LA Times).

there will be medication shortages because so much of the pharma supply chain is outside of the US. Years of moving manufacturing overseas has resulted in a substantial deficit in US manufacturing which increases our vulnerability to threats.

Countries with more rigid systems and fewer personal liberties may end up weathering the economic issues better than free market democracies. It is a challenge for those free market, democratic systems to figure out how to build resiliency and protect liberties while navigating out of this catastrophe.

The business and economic sector should step up to the plate and put forth its best minds onto the task. Innovation is not just in the realm of science. It will not be easy to roll back the lockdowns, but it is a solvable problem. Just opening things up haphazardly could be disastrous, medically and economically. It is within our abilities to figure out this challenge, but we have to be willing to accept the reality of the situation and be open to new ways of doing things going forward. Within this context, there will be many important revelations, yet to be elucidated.

Finally, with global pandemics comes the risk of unrest and a breakdown in international order. The extent to which the world can police itself and protect against such developments is yet to be seen. This too will be a revelation of sorts. Hopefully, it will be one of reconciliation and mutual support across countries, rather than consternation and destruction.

Revelation #6: We are entering into a new age of human history and everyone has a role.

There will be more pandemics and other threats to society. The future belongs to those who have the vision and dedication to innovate in the face of adversity and who have the leadership skills to articulate that vision in a manner that brings together different groups for the sake of finding solutions.

The AMAA can play a significant role in building that future for the people that it serves. There are indeed short term needs for Armenians in Armenia, the Middle East, Europe, Eurasia, South American, Australia, Asia and right here in North America. Some people are in need for the first time in their lives. Some people were already in need and are now in crisis. Within its existing structures, AMAA is rallying the community to bring about relief and blessings to many.

There are also midterm needs that require understanding how the world is changing. What will the COVID-19 crisis do to the Armenians of Armenia and in the Diaspora? What will happen to Armenians in the Middle East where they have already suffered unspeakable ravages over the last 20 years? How can AMAA help them navigate a brighter future?

Finally, there are long term needs that require AMAA to adapt to the new realities in the US and abroad. This is the most difficult task of all and requires innovation. AMAA can make the commitment to innovate now in order to

secure the future. During the COVID-19 outbreak, people have expected scientists and healthcare professionals to work incredibly long hours, risk their lives and their families' lives and create brilliant science to solve the COVID-19 problems quickly. Yet, there is little movement of equal proportion to address the impact of COVID-19 on businesses, education and social welfare. There is no reason why innovation should be restricted to science. Every sector, including the non-profit sector, needs to stand up tall and pitch in to help. This is where discernment of spiritual gifts become manifest for the benefit of the body of Christ. Corinthians 12 is our teacher: "But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it,²⁵ so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other.²⁶ If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it."

We need to think differently and creatively. Just because we have done things a certain way for decades does not mean that it makes sense to continue the same way going forward. Let's honor each other, let's honor the spiritual gifts bestowed upon each member, and let's allow those gifts to flourish so that innovation will occur and carry us forward into a bright future full of hope. □



Avedisian School students are our hope for the future. One student's expression of gratefulness: "Thank you dear Teacher."



AMAA donates personal protective equipment support through the Armenia Fund.



Armenian Evangelical Bethel Church of Aleppo, Syria - teaching the elderly how to use masks.

*Susan Jerian, M.D., a former AMAA Board member, is a National Cancer Institute trained oncologist with 25 years experience at FDA, Amgen, Inc. and ONCORD Inc. specializing in biotech and pharmaceutical drug development of new medicines.

Starve Your Fear, Feed Your Faith

God has not given us a spirit of fear; but a spirit of power, love and self-discipline.

2 Timothy 1:7

By Rev. Dr. Avedis Boynerian*

Unfortunately, the coronavirus outbreak continues to make headlines with new cases reported every day. Our hearts go out to those who are infected by the virus and to their families. On difficult and uncertain days, such as these, many of us turn to God and to His Word for comfort, direction and peace. Many of us are fearful as to what will happen next – will they and their loved ones be affected by the virus?

Fear is a reality of life. It's true for believers and non-believers. Fear keeps us from living our normal lives. It cripples us and prevents us from doing what God wants us to do.

We know we should not feed our fear or dwell on it, because if we do, it controls us. WE should know this: Fear takes control of us, *only if we allow it!* Here is a story that supports that.

An American Indian once shared: "It seems that I have two dogs fighting in my heart: one is a very good dog, a beautiful dog and is always watching out for my best interests. The other is a very bad dog, which is always trying to destroy the things that I want to build up. These dogs give me a lot of trouble because they are always quarreling and fighting each other."

One of his friends looked up and asked, "Which one wins?"

The American Indian said, "Whichever one I give in to."

The more we entertain fear, the more it controls and cripples us. Remember: Fear takes control of us, *only if we allow it!*

The apostle Paul says to young Timothy, his protégé, "God has not given us a spirit of fear; but a spirit of power, and of love, and of self-discipline" (2 Timothy 1:7). Paul is saying to Timothy, "do not be afraid of what anyone can do to you. God has not given us a spirit of fear; but a spirit of power, and of love, and of self-discipline." Therefore, based on this verse, God gives us three things:

1. God gives us power. What we need to do is: Get rid ourselves of a spirit of fear by focusing on the power of God, who gives us power and helps us to face our fear.

King David in Psalm 23:4 says, "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me."

When we are going "through the valley of the shadow of death" we may lose our focus of God and our circumstances may overwhelm us. All we can see are the effects of the coronavirus, fear, isolation and pain.

But David did not lose sight of God. He trusted God to be with him. He said, "Yes, Lord, I know that *You are with me.*" David, rather than feeding his fear, he fed his faith in God!

If we are feeling that we are in "the valley of the shadow of death," we need to get off to a quiet place and learn to feed our faith in God, who is still in charge and in control. We need to believe that here is power in God's ever-present presence!

2. God gives us love. The Bible says, "There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear" (1 John 4:18). We need to learn to turn ourselves and our loved ones to the love of God and trust that He is with us, and He is enough.

God does not leave us nor forsake us. He promises to be with us, at all times! He is a good God. All we need to do is: Trust in His unchanging love for us and His ever-present presence.

3. God gives us self-discipline. Self-discipline is the ability to discipline ourselves from within. It's like a muscle. The less we train it, the weaker we become. The more we train it, the stronger we become. Faith in God and His presence helps us overcome fear.

Jesus often asked His disciples, "Where is your faith?" (Luke 8:25). In the height of the storm in the Sea of Galilee, the disciples were overcome with fear. They cried out, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?" (Mark 4:38).

In fact, Jesus seemed surprised that the disciples were filled with fear! First, He calmed the storm and then, asked the disciples, "Where is your faith? Why were you so afraid?" By saying that, Jesus was saying to His disciples, "You do not have to be afraid. You just need to *stop feeding your fear and start feeding your faith in God for He is enough!*"

When we have done our part - are prepared spiritually, mentally, emotionally, physically, well in advance, we have nothing to fear, because we have fed our faith in God! □



*Rev. Dr. Avedis Boynerian is the Pastor of the Armenian Memorial Church, Watertown, MA. This message was preached from his home during the social distancing due to COVID-19 on Sunday, March 22, 2020.



Easter Faith

By His power God raised the Lord from the dead, and He will raise us also.

I Corinthians 6:14

By Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian, Armenian Evangelical World Council Executive Director

Easter is the annual commemoration of the Resurrection of Christ, the celebration of the victory of God's love, through Christ, over sin and death, and His power to bring new life out of apparent defeat.

The experience of the Risen Christ changed the early Christians from frightened followers of a crucified person to confident spokesmen for an everlasting Lord. On that first Easter Sunday a miraculous transformation took place in the lives of the cowardly disciples whose hope and dreams had been destroyed on Crucifixion Friday. They had encountered the Risen Christ and experienced the power of His Resurrection. That Easter faith made the difference. The people who were afraid became brave and no amount of oppression stopped the new missionaries, who "turned the world upside down." That same Easter faith has been the experience of people from all walks of life across the centuries. What is Easter faith and why is it relevant?

First of all, Easter faith brings us a victorious perspective that ours is a creative universe whose Master is God. Easter faith asserts that God is still in charge of His world; He can be trusted; His creation is in reliable hands. To be sure, there are evil powers in this world, but there is a divine Power stronger than the dark forces; that, even though Pilate, Herod, the mob, Golgotha and the cross have their words to say, the final word is God's, for as the writer says, "God Omnipotent reigneth."

Second. Easter faith brings victorious perspective into the area of death. It asserts the fact that although death can touch our bodies, it cannot destroy our spirits. Because Christ rose from the dead, death now is a defeated enemy. It asserts the fact that life has perspective beyond the grave. The grave is not a blind alley, and death is not a terminus; it asserts that Jesus has defeated mankind's greatest enemy—death—and we shall live because Christ lives.

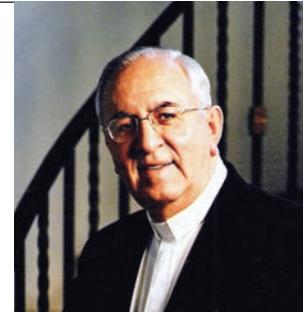
Third and last, Easter faith brings victorious perspective into life here and now. Easter is not a remembrance of what happened 20 centuries ago, but a celebration that in every present instant there is triumph (victory) available. And because God can be trusted both in life and death, there is hope for those who are fighting hard battles

and carrying heavy burdens. There is hope for all who can roll away the stone of their interior tomb. The stone of sin and self-defeat and can experience resurrection through the Risen Lord.

Hence, Easter faith not only declares to us that we should not be afraid of death, but we should not be afraid of life and its challenges. Human life is a meaningful adventure on an open road, and in our daily struggle we should not throw in the towel, we should not give up.

As I am writing these lines, I am aware of the preoccupation of the whole world with the devastating COVID-19 pandemic. Many people have lost their peace of mind in the face of this seemingly hopeless situation. Needless to say, we don't know what the future will hold, but as Christians we know Who holds the future. We are asked to be cautious and take every measure against this coronavirus, but we should not be paralyzed by fear and apprehension, because as Apostle Paul put it, "God did not give us a spirit of fear, but a spirit power, of love and self-discipline (II Timothy 1:7).

Easter faith tells us that we can keep walking confidently when the going is tough, we can keep hoping in the midst of despair, we can keep on living triumphantly in the midst of challenges, and we can keep declaring,



**Christ is Risen!
Blessed is the Resurrection of Christ.**

**Օրիստո յարեալ ի մեռելց:
Օրիստո Ե Յարութիւնը Օրիստոսի:**

**Kristos Haryav Ee Merelots;
Orhnyal Eh Harootyuneh Kristosi!**

AMAA Executive Director/CEO Zaven Khanjian's New York Times Square Virtual Armenian Genocide Commemoration Message

Սիրելի Հայութակիցներ,
Dear Compatriots,
Dear Friends,

I hope this message finds each one of you and your loved ones healthy and well.

As I ponder on the heartbreaking fallout of the global pandemic, consuming the human mind and soul, and the occasion we are invited to commemorate today, I am reminded of the wisdom that comes from the Word of God (in Ecclesiastes 3) which says:

**"There is a time for everything,
And a season for every activity under the heavens.
A time to weep and a time to laugh,
A time to mourn and a time to dance,
A time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing."**

The past few months have been emotionally and physically draining for all of us in our country, in the Homeland and in the world, as an unprecedented and unimaginable reality has engulfed the world, dictating new norms of life.

The tragedy is tangible, as we witness the nation scramble to care for the inflicted, struggle to unearth lifesaving medical supplies, battle to stop the spread and mourn its victims, unable to give them the mannerly burial they deserve.

As thousands succumb to the wrath of the uninvited vile, hundreds of thousands of first respondents, medical doctors, nurses, public servants, Good Samaritans, volunteers and NGOs are everywhere, round the clock, bringing care, cure, hope, and in many cases life to patients' scrambling beds in hospitals or urgently erected medical facilities.

Hurray to all who have the calling, the commitment and/or obligation to reach out.

One hundred and five years ago another vile, called Ottoman Turkey, inflicted a premeditated physical obliteration upon a peaceful segment of its population living on their ancestral lands for a few millennia, long before the Turkish hoof treaded into the Near East, leaving death and destruction behind.

There is a time for everything.

Today, amid the coronavirus tragedy, we stop the ticking clock to honor the memory and pay respect to the million and a half of our kin, who in the most brutal and inhumane manner were sickled to extinction. Our forebears fell victim, to satisfy the dark and blind hatred of an official, state organized crime, that would not tolerate a peaceful, productive, industrious Christian minority on the land.

There were no cameras to witness their forced deportation. There was no news media to report the 'murder of a nation.' There were no first respondents on the thorny fields, rocky mountainous roads, blazing desert sand, treacherous barren undeveloped roads or dark and horrifying caves. There were no first respondents to care for a delivering mother or an orphaned child. No first respondents to quench a thirst or fight hunger. There were no first respondents to save a drowning teenager or a bride, who rejected submission, on fire.

We salute the long anticipated and gratifying acknowledgment of the crime of Genocide by the US Congress in 2019 but despite a century of time for introversion, the heirs of the perpetrators remain remorseless with their conscious self-denial of the crime.

Today, they too are stricken by COVID-19. It is my prayer and wish, that like the whole world, the master of denial, Turkey too, will rid itself from the devastation and agony caused by the ailment and find peace.

There is a time for everything says the Bible.

Today, I am guided by the Word of God who said in Deuteronomy 32:35 "It is mine to avenge; I will repay." "In due time their foot will slip; their day of disaster is near and their doom rushes upon them."

There is a time for everything.

Today, it is our time, to bow in respect of the fallen and reaffirm our collective quest for justice.

There is a time for everything. □



Armenian Evangelical Churches of Iran

Iran, also called Persia, is a country in Western Asia with 83 million inhabitants. Iranian-Armenians or Persian-Armenians before the revolution in 1979 estimated their population in Iran between 70,000-200,000, half of whom lived in Tehran, the capital of the country. Other areas with a high concentration of Armenians were Tabriz, Salmas and Isfahan's Jolfa (Nor Jugha) quarter. It is believed that the Armenians of Nor Jugha were brought to Iran by the Safavid Shah Abbas in early 1600 because of their artisanship. They had a great role in the rebuilding and development of Isfahan, then the capital of Persia. Armenians have lived for centuries in these regions, which today form modern Iran. Most of the oldest Armenian churches, monasteries, and chapels are in Iran, including the most famous Monastery of Saint Thaddeus. Until the beginning of the 20th Century, Iran had one of the largest populations of Armenians in the world alongside neighboring Ottoman Empire. After the revolution on 1979, the Armenian population declined and currently it is estimated that less than 50,000 Armenians live in Tehran. Armenian communities in the other cities of Iran have also shrunk immensely.

Among the Armenian Evangelical (Protestant) communities in the Middle East, the Armenian Protestant Community in Iran, formed in the middle of the 19th Century, holds a special place. Currently there are four Armenian Evangelical Churches in Iran:

The Armenian Evangelical "Sourp Hovhannes" Church (Tehran), established in 1876, is the main Church. Ever since its inception, "Sourp Hovhannes" Church faithfully and courageously has served God, preached the Gospel of Christ, and ministered in the local Armenian communities. Rev. Sergei (Matavos) Shaverdian and Rev. Dr. Michel Aghamalian are the Senior Ministers and Rev. Vazrik Safarian is the Assistant Pastor.



L to R: Rev. Vazrik Safarian, Rev. Dr. Michel Aghamalian and Rev. Sergei Shaverdian.



Sunday Worship Service at "Sourp Hovhannes" Church.

"Sourp Hovhannes" Church has two branch churches - "Hokeshounch" and "Shnorhali" churches, governed and supervised by the Board of Elders of "Sourp Hovhannes" Church. And the fourth Church is Emmanuel Church.

The Armenian Evangelical "Hokeshounch" Church (Tehran)

The Pastor of the Church is Rev. Sergei Shaverdian. Rev. Shaverdian has been serving the Armenian Evangelical Churches of Iran with much dedication for over 30 years. He holds a degree in Armenian language and a master's degree in Sociology. He has also completed the theological training Program of the Synod of the Evangelical Churches in Iran.

The Armenian Evangelical "Shnorhali" Church (Tehran)

The Pastor of the Church is Rev. Dr. Michel Aghamalian. Rev. Aghamalian holds a Ph.D. from the University of Tehran concentrating on the Philosophy of Religion. He also attended the Near East School of Theology in Beirut for one year and holds a degree in theology. He has translated many important classical and theological Christian books. Rev. Aghamalian has been serving the Church for over 25 years.

The Armenian Evangelical Emmanuel Church (Tehran)

The Pastor of the Church is Rev. Vazrik Safarian. Rev. Safarian has completed the theological training Program of the Synod of the Evangelical Churches in Iran. He has been serving the Church for over 25 years and is very active in distributing humanitarian aid on behalf of the Church during times of great national disasters.

"Shnorhali" and "Hokeshounch" churches started their ministries in the 1960s under the leadership of Rev. Nerses Khachadourian. Initially the churches started as outreach centers, mainly focusing on children and youth. Arpineh Mahshigian, sent by the AMAA to Iran as a missionary, served as Director of Children's

and Youth ministries in these centers, which later were established as fellowships and then churches.

The Armenian Evangelical Churches of Iran have an active Sunday school, Youth group, women's groups, humanitarian assistance programs, leadership training programs and other religious and cultural activities, including the quarterly "Sourhandag" publication.

As is customary in the Armenian Evangelical communities in the Middle East, education has a great emphasis in the ministry of the churches. Hence, almost all churches in the Middle East have established a school next to the church. Similarly, the Armenian Evangelical Churches of Iran established the Gohar Mesropian School. The School started its activities in 1950 and served the Community in different locations until moving to the current building. The groundbreaking ceremony for the new School building was held on November 7, 1963 and the project was completed at the end of 1964. On November 8, 1963, one day after the School's groundbreaking ceremony, the Church held its new Church building groundbreaking ceremony on the same lot.

Since the beginning, several dedicated ministers have served the churches in Iran. The immediate past Senior Minister along with Rev. Shaverdian was Rev. Hendrik Shanazarian who served from 2000-2007. Rev. Arshavir Yeritzian, who passed away in Germany in 2018, served the churches in Iran from 1980 until his retirement in 2000. Rev. Yeritzian also served the Gohar Mesropian Armenian Evangelical School and was Executive Director of the Synod of the Evangelical Churches of Iran. Prior to Rev. Yeritzian, the Senior Minister of the Armenian Evangelical Churches of Iran was Rev. Tateos Michaelian who served with dedication, educating and training many to serve in the Church until his tragic martyrdom in 1994. A courageous man with strong convictions and many talents, Rev. Michaelian became one of the most influential Protestant Church leaders in Iran. He was a Christian who courageously witnessed to his faith at all times and in all places, advocating for justice with no regard for his own safety. He had been a preacher, pastor, teacher, author, translator and an administrator. Besides being the Senior Minister of the churches, he was also the Administrator of Gohar Mesropian School, Executive Secretary of the Synod of the Evangelical Churches of Iran, and Executive Secretary of the Bible Society of Iran.

Some of the other ministers who served the Armenian Evangelical Churches of Iran were Rev. Nerses Khachadourian, Badveli Ghazar Tovmassian, Badveli Nicola Mouradian, Rev. Manasseh Shnorhokian, Rev. Vigen Galustian, Rev. Hakob



Youth from Iran who participated in the All-Armenian Youth Conference organized by the AMAA in Armenia during the summer of 2018.



The Choir of "Sourp Hovhannes" Church.



The ladies of Iran Churches celebrate World Day of Prayer.



Sunday School Children.

Moudoian, Rev. Theodore Bulbulian, Rev. Nariman Nigoghosian, Badveli Asadour Yeghisaiyan, Badveli Garabed Elmasian, Brother Abraham Hovasapian and many other lay ministers and evangelists.

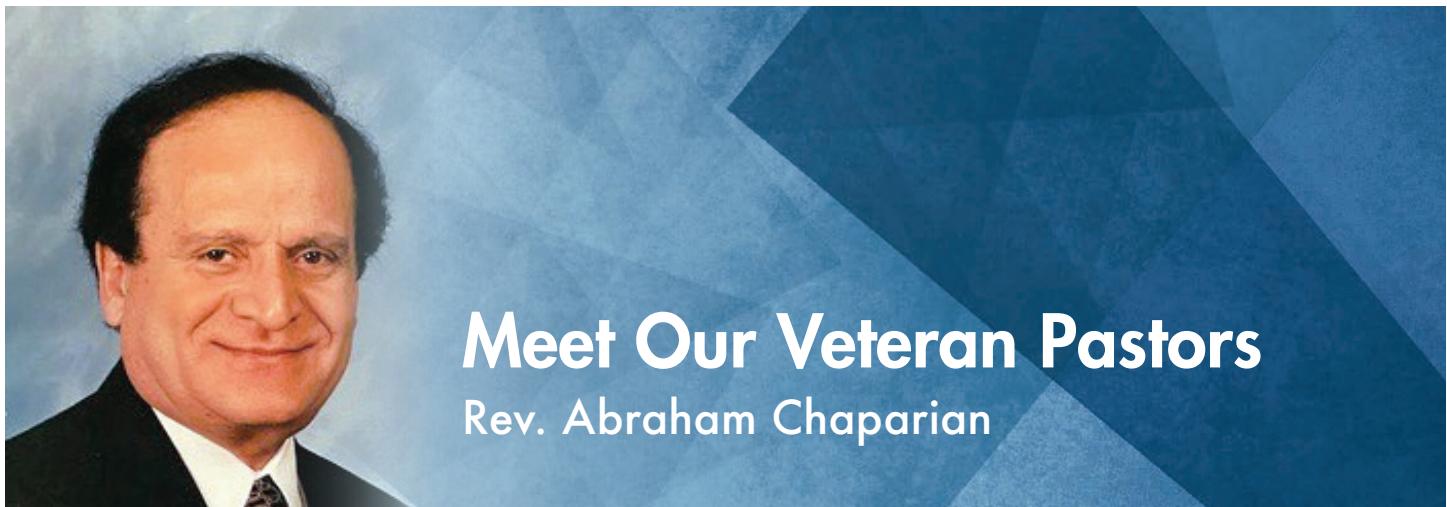
The Armenian Evangelical Churches of Iran have established a close fellowship with the sister Armenian churches, and together they often organize joint events on certain occasions and pay cordial visits to each other.

The Armenian Evangelical Churches of Iran are members of the Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East. □

(Compiled by Louisa Janbazian with the help of Rev. Hendrik Shanazarian, utilizing various sources).



Gohar Mesropian School in the 1970s. Sitting in the middle is Rev. Tateos Michaelian.



Meet Our Veteran Pastors

Rev. Abraham Chaparian

Rev. Abraham Chaparian was born in 1935 in Azes, Syria to the family of Abraham and Lucine Chaparian. His birth name was Hampartsum, but later he assumed his father's name. He attended Sahakian Elementary School in Azes. Then the Chaparians moved to Beirut, Lebanon.

In 1953 at the age of 18, Abraham accepted Jesus Christ as his personal Savior and God called him into Christian ministry. He attended the Nazarene Bible School in Beirut, Lebanon for three years – from 1956 to 1959. While in School, he was elected President of the student body and was involved in the ministry of the local Church. After graduation, from 1959-1960, he served the Lord as full-time Minister, visiting and preaching in Nazarene churches in Syria, Lebanon and Jordan. From 1961 to 1967, he served as Pastor of Sin-El-Fil Armenian Church of the Nazarene. During Rev. Chaparian's ministry, the Church moved from a rented facility to a new church building, which was constructed during his ministry there. He was ordained on April 24, 1967.

To further his education, Rev. Chaparian immigrated to the United States in 1967. He attended and graduated from Point Loma Nazarene University (formerly Point Loma Nazarene College) with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Religion. Later, in 1982, he received his Master of Arts degree in counseling from the same Institution.

Rev. Chaparian was called to ministry in Hollywood, CA in 1981. Sunday services at 4:00 p.m. had already been in process in January 1981 during Rev. Abraham Jizmejian's interim ministry in Hollywood. He started to lead the ministry in April 1981. In May 1982, with a charter membership of forty, the Fellowship was organized into a Church and named the Armenian Evangelical Church of Hollywood. Later that same year, at the Biennial Assembly of the Armenian Evangelical Union of North America (AEUNA) held in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, the Church was officially accepted by the Union.

The year 1988 was the turning point in the Church's history. The congregation was worshipping in a Baptist

Church. As the Armenian Evangelical Church of Hollywood grew, the host Church could not accommodate it any longer. A few months later, a church building was found, and the congregation relocated to the new building on Franklin Avenue in Los Angeles.

The Church began to use the facilities in 1989. The Church has a very effective ministry as a whole. One of the outreach programs the Church initiated in 1993 was called "New Direction for Armenian Youth." The program not only helped at risk youth and their families, but also served as an effective tool of evangelism in the Community. The Church's ministry also includes Saturday Armenian School, neighborhood Bible Studies, leaders training classes, men and women's fellowships, Junior High and High School Bible studies, College and Career Bible studies, midweek prayer and Bible Study, and summertime Vacation Bible School.

Rev. Chaparian's outreach ministry included Armenia, where he visited several times, preaching, teaching and holding very large evangelistic meetings throughout the country. On two of his visits, 10 or more young people from the Church joined him as well.

Rev. Chaparian has also been active in AEUNA programs. He has served on the Board in the capacity of Chairperson to Ministry and Church Planting. He was instrumental in establishing a church in Las Vegas, which he visited faithfully for more than four years, holding worship services once a month, and for more than a year, holding those services once a week. Many of the church young people would accompany him and help out with the worship service on several occasions.

Rev. Chaparian married Mary Youssefian in 1961. They were blessed with four children, three daughters and a son, and six grandchildren. They currently reside in Pasadena, CA. □

This biography is an amended version of Rev. Abraham Chaparian's biography in Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian's book "Fifty Years of Christian Service," 2000, pages 61-62.



AMAA's Generational Impact in Armenia and Artsakh

Editor's Note: William Denk is a young American volunteer serving the AMAA in Armenia and Artsakh. This article is a compilation of his early reflections. At the outbreak of COVID-19, AMAA offered William Denk to return to the US, but he was determined to stay back and serve.

By William Denk

Most Americans without Armenian roots might not immediately choose to volunteer in Armenia. As a Christian and a philologist, I had always wanted to visit this historic country and learn its ancient language. At 32 years old, I found myself in between careers, living with my parents; learning of an opportunity to volunteer with the AMAA was a dream come true. I accepted an exciting position, which involved a variety of tasks: travel throughout Armenia to reflect on AMAA's service, work on renovations in AMAA's Vanadzor church, and teach several English classes.

During my first two weeks in Armenia, I visited many AMAA sites, witnessing firsthand its impact on local communities, such as the new center in Gyumri, the Shogh flagship building in the outskirts of Yerevan, the AMAA clinic in Yerevan, as well as many activities serving children and families in the regions of Artsakh and Syunik. Wherever I went, I was absolutely amazed by the efficiency of service, and the nonstop dedication of every AMAA employee. For

example, in Gyumri, Rosanna works as the receptionist at the front desk, but also runs multiple activities and voluntarily distributes milk to 112 children through the Infant Milk Program. At another AMAA center, I saw the same pattern of hard-working employees who also serve as volunteers, like in Sisian Center, where the entire staff helps keep the building clean. AMAA's activities in Sisian actually stand as a testament to the generational effect of AMAA's programs; Pastor Arman of Sisian (who manages the AMAA center there) grew up in nearby Goris, where he was inspired by Rev. Sarkis Ochinyan, Pastor of the Evangelical Church of Armenia and Manager of the AMAA office in Goris.

I first met Rev. Sarkis, a fair-haired man with piercing blue eyes, at the Goris bus stop. His face is always creased in a smile, whether he is cracking jokes with adults or talking to children. If you follow him up the steps to the AMAA Center, you feel as though you are stepping into a 10th Century Christian monastery. It's a unique stone building with three levels,

each only accessible from the steep, outdoor staircase, which soars up from a stone chamber surrounded by columns. Though not particularly large, the Center houses a Church, Christian Education classes, Sunday school, and an after-school day program. Like other AMAA centers, the Goris Center serves people of all ages by Child Sponsorship, Infant Milk programs, and Granny Sponsorship, which assists the elderly.

Inside the Pastor's office, we meet a large group of mostly young mothers. I notice that one lady appears to be significantly older, maybe in her seventies. "For one whole year, every Saturday, my granddaughter and two grandsons have come here. Our family knows they are receiving the best Christian education at the AMAA center," she says. Across the table, one of the youngest mothers is balancing a one-year old girl on her lap. The baby, tired of the adult discussion, begins to cry and shriek. Rev. Sarkis, who is sitting at his desk next to the woman and the child, begins



Staff at the AMAA Goris church works hard to keep children entertained, while teaching them about the Bible.



Rev. Sarkis stands with his "disciples;" the Pastor's strong AMAA program in Goris has inspired an army of local young people to volunteer.

talking gibberish and waving his hands. Almost immediately, the tiny girl starts to smile and laugh, completely forgetting her prior discomfort. "I have two children here already. When she gets older, she will definitely come here, too," the mother tells us. I later learn that the tiny child was helped by the AMAA Milk Fund Program, which distributes formula to 26 infants in Goris alone.

Meline, the Center's Social Worker, invites us to visit some people she works with. We hop in Pastor Sarkis's car, a well-maintained, ancient Mercedes. "It has over 350,000 miles on it," he tells me proudly. Goris is a beautiful, ancient city with a population of 20,300. We turn down a dark little alleyway, and roll up behind a large, cinderblock building. Inside, up several steep flights of stairs, we meet one of the members of the AMAA Granny Program. A sweet lady with a pretty smile, I am surprised to learn that she does not have any grandkids. "I was happiest when I was younger, working every day. In Armenia, pensions are so little we live in fear of the day we cannot work anymore, because we don't know how we will afford anything. About ten years ago, I heard about this organization (AMAA) that helps out older people living alone." The elderly lady is very sad when we leave. She tells Meline and Rev. Sarkis, "It's tradition for me to serve you coffee and tea." I feel awful leaving so soon, but I have a taxi to catch in an hour and a half, and we still have one more visit.

We roll down a side street, lined by grim tenements. Directly in front of us, our view is seized by a massive mountain, so huge it casts its shadow over everything. We find a miniature kitchen at the top of the steps, opening directly into a single bedroom. The tiniest, most adorable little girl is perched on top of the bed, looking up from her book with huge, curious eyes. "She's very intelligent," Meline mentions. I am surprised to learn that the child is ten years old; her three-year-old brother is already bigger than her. Unfortunately, she was born with a condition that hinders growth, but has more than made up for it with a voracious appetite for books, computers, and drawing. "When I work in the kitchen," the mother tells us, "she always watches her brother for me, here in the bedroom, keeping him entertained by building things with blocks." Life is difficult; three children live with the parents in this cramped apartment. Yet they are very generous hosts, heaping up candy

and snacks on the table. While the wife prepares coffee, Meline tells us that the girl also enjoys making things, such as the ornate bracelet she is wearing. "I also like this book a lot," she says, pointing to the large book on her bed, an anthology of Bible stories distributed by the AMAA. Hard times became worse when their father lost his job in October. "Now, I'm trying to support my whole family on 36,000 drams monthly (about \$70.00) unemployment." Throughout Armenia, unemployment is high. Many men leave the country to find jobs in Russia. Some never return to their Armenian wives and children. "I honestly have no idea how this family can survive," the Reverend tells me. "It's almost impossible."

Leaving Goris, I was amazed by the magnitude of the AMAA operations.

This is just one town impacted by the organization's sweeping ministry, and the effects are visible everywhere, in every person, at every age. Small children's lives depend on the distribution of formula; when a little older, they make friends and are educated by the plethora of programs at the center, their families sometimes directly funded by the AMAA. But the AMAA does not forget people as they grow older; the elderly, too, appreciate the help and love of dedicated social workers such as Meline.

I arrived in Vanadzor in early February. After seeing so many Shogh Day Centers throughout Armenia, I was able to work in one twice a week, as an ESL teacher. Laura, a raven-haired lady with a quiet smile, is the Armenian teacher here. Like so many other AMAA staff members, just a brief conversation with her will show you how highly qualified she is. A skilled linguist, she is fluent in multiple languages, including German, Georgian, and Krabar (Ancient Armenian). The Shogh children are very intelligent, and always eager to learn. One of the students in my class, Tigran, is an English



Meline, Armine, Pastor Sarkis, and a local granny. Meline assists 22 local elderly people with the AMAA Granny Program.



Christian education is strong in AMAA's Goris Center. Gohar, the Goris youth director, retells Bible stories to her young audience.



Like all AMAA employees, Rosanna volunteers after hours for a range of programs, like the Infant Milk Program.

enthusiast, always eager to demonstrate his strong vocabulary. Sona, in another class, is an incredibly gifted young artist, and illustrated every new word she learned.

Vanadzor Church and AMAA Center, located on the other side of town from

Shogh, is a magnificent red-stone building, built in 2004. Here, Lia heads a thriving youth program, guiding the community's future. Almost a dozen young people, in their late teens and early twenties, volunteer to help guide and teach adolescents. On a typical Sunday, the upstairs Chapel is packed with 40-50 teenagers, singing worship songs and playing games. Afterwards, they break into smaller groups for Bible study sessions. In one group, Lia, helped by one of the young volunteers, taught the children the names of all twelve of Jesus's disciples in a matter of twenty minutes, using competitive games and fun learning strategies.

The effects of AMAA's ministry in Vanadzor are amazing. Before the quarantine, I witnessed the generational impact by attending the crowded, 11:00

a.m. Sunday worship. Young couples holding infants and elderly parishioners sang together throughout the vibrant service, with a chorus of young women at the front of the sanctuary. Many of these parishioners have directly benefited from the AMAA's assistance. Vanadzor, like everywhere the AMAA is present, distributes formula for infants. Now, with the quarantine in effect, Vanadzor's team, under the leadership of AMAA representative. Janna, is distributing groceries to elderly people.

Living in Vanadzor allows me to understand why the AMAA is so successful in every community it serves. A small infant's very life may depend on the Children's Milk Fund Program. Later, the same child could attend one of the AMAA's

mankabardez (kindergarten) programs. When I asked a mother why she chose AMAA, she said, "Because all my friends told me that AMAA is excellent, and here the teachers and workers really help their students learn new things." AMAA's Shogh Day Centers offer additional help and support for many children into their teen years. By the time any member of a community reaches adulthood, there is a good chance that in some way the AMAA has touched their lives and made a strong impression. Sponsorship programs help families struggling with tough times and the AMAA Granny Program helps the elderly.

AMAA's service is interwoven into the very fabric of every Armenian community, becoming a part of people's lives. □



The team at the AMAA Yerevan clinic includes two experienced social workers, a dentist, a pharmacist, and two Medical Doctors.



Rev. Sarkis and his wife Armine on the left and William Denk and Meline on the right.

AMAA Soup Kitchen in Stepanavan Distributes Food to Elderly During COVID-19 Crisis in Armenia



The Armenian Missionary Association of America, in partnership with its sister organization in France "Hope for Armenia" (Espoir pour l'Arménie) continues to operate a Soup Kitchen in Stepanavan, Armenia for the past 25 years.

The current State of Emergency in Armenia, due to the worldwide spread of the COVID-19 Virus, has also changed the operation of this Soup Kitchen. The Soup Kitchen continues to operate; however, volunteers are currently delivering the food to the homes of the elderly while wearing gloves and masks to ensure that health regulations are properly followed.





Maestro Tigran Mansurian Visits AMAA's Avedisian School in Yerevan

Years will pass by and today's Avedisian School students will grow, yet many of them who were in the School's Auditorium on February 21, 2020 will say, "I have seen and heard the greatest Armenian composer of our time, Tigran Mansurian." Or, "I personally asked the Maestro a question, and he answered me." Or, "I held my breath listening to the Maestro," "I'll never forget ..." and they will recount many other unforgettable memories of the day.

Hosting the great Maestro under the roof of the Avedisian School was truly a memorable event, as the beloved composer, at the zenith of his respectable life, taught a small but invaluable lesson to the students.

What was Maestro Mansurian talking about with the Avedisian students? He advised the students to see only the good and be forgiving; on the path of real victory to know also to be conquered. He also talked about the freedom of the creative soul; about the character of an intellectual

or artist, and many other subjects that touched the soul of the students.

The living legend Maestro Mansurian was engaging. There were more students who wished to ask a question, than those who did. Then he approached the piano, sat down slowly and his fingers touched the keyboard. And the sounds of his famous music from the film "A Little Sky" first spread then began to soar to great heights. Even the air became noble... and the hall held its breath...

At the conclusion of this exciting event, School Principal Melanya Geghamyan presented the Maestro with a book about Komitas "The Magnificent Song of All Armenians" and a book about the Avedisian School. And the students promised to continue their newly formed friendship with the Maestro by sending letters.

The meeting was not yet over as the dear guest, who left the room, continued answering questions, signing autographs and taking pictures with the students outside the Auditorium.



Established in 1988, AMAA's Khoren and Shooshanig Avedisian School is an educational institution that provides outstanding K-12 holistic, tuition-free education in a modern, environmentally friendly building, using state-of-the-art facilities in the low-income Southwest District of Malatia-Sebastia in Yerevan, Armenia. □



AMAA Executive Director/CEO Zaven Khanjian's Congratulatory Letter to Arayik Harutyunyan, Newly Elected President of Artsakh Republic



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FIELD DIRECTOR &
PASTOR TO PASTORS IN ARMENIA
REV. MORDICH MELKONIAN
AMAA-ARMENIA REPRESENTATIVE
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17. 04. 2020թ.

Արցախի Հանրապետության Նորընտիր Նախագահ
Արայիկ Հարությունյանին

Մեծարգն՝ Ա. Հարությունյան,

Ամերիկայի Հայ Ավետարանչական Ընկերակցության անունից ընդունեք իմ
ամենաշեռլ շնորհավորանքները՝ Արցախի Հանրապետության Նախագահ

Ըստ Արցախի Վարչական և անտական Նախարար՝ Ձեր
պատուակարած տարիներին Արցախն աշխ է ընկերատարքեր
մարտահրավերները դիմակայելու զորությամբ ու մեծ կարողությամբ:
Կտահ ենք, որ երկի դեկավար պատուում Դուք կարունակեք
արդյունավետ աշխատել Ձեր բոլոր ծրագրերը իրականության կրառնան՝

Ամերիկայի Հայ Ավետարանչական Ընկերակցությունը, որն այս տարի նշելու
է Արցախի Հանրապետությունում իր բարեգործական գործունեության
25 տարին, իր զորակցությունն ու պատասակամությունն է հայտնում
այսուհետև ևս օգտակար ինել Ձեզ՝ Արցախն ավելի հզր, ապահով և շեն
դարձնելու Վեհ գործում:

Ի դեմք Ձեզ՝ Արցախի հերոս Ժողովրդին մաղթում եմ քաջառողջություն,
կայուն խաղաղություն, նորանոր ձեռքբերումներ, բարեկեցություն և
հաստատու քայերով դեսի նոր հաղթանակների ընթացք:

Թո՞ղ մեր Աստծո՝ Ճիշտս Քրիստոսի աջք հովանի ինի Ձեզ և Իր բարի
կամքով առաջնորդի Ձեզ Ձեր բոլոր Նախաձեռնություններում:
Ասոված պահապան Արցախ աշխարհին և համայն հայությանը:

Հարգանքով՝ Չավեն Խանջյան
ԱՀԱԱ Գործադիր տնօրին

«Գաց՝ ամբողջ աշխարհը, ու քարեցի՛ աւետարանը բոլոր արարաններուն» Մարկ 16:15
«Գաց՝ ամբողջ աշխարհը, ու քարեցի՛ աւետարանը բոլոր արարաններուն» Մարկ 16: 15



David Sargsyan, Mayor of Stepanakert, Artsakh Meets with AMAA's Representative in Artsakh

On February 17, David Sargsyan, Mayor of Stepanakert, Artsakh received Viktor Karapetyan, AMAA's Representative in Artsakh. First Deputy Mayor Samvel Ghulyan also participated in the meeting. Mr. Karapetyan presented in detail the educational, social and Christian education programs of the AMAA, which have been implemented in Stepanakert and other regions of Artsakh.

The Mayor expressed his satisfaction for AMAA's cooperation with different structures of the State, both in humanitarian aid and natural-cultural initiatives frameworks and expressed his unconditional support in all upcoming events planned by the AMAA. Highly appreciating



all the patriotic activities of the Association in Artsakh over the past 25 years, Mayor Sargsyan expressed hope that the AMAA will continue fulfilling its mission through ongoing and long-term programs aimed

at the development of Artsakh. Mr. Karapetyan reaffirmed the AMAA's willingness to cooperate with various State structures for the sake of an educated, powerful and peaceful Artsakh. □

Meet Our Staff at AMAA

Jane Wenning, AMAA News and Correspondence Support/Assistant

Jane Wenning, AMAA News and Correspondence Support/Assistant is celebrating 10 years with the Armenian Missionary Association of America this June. Jane proofreads and edits the AMAA News, as well as other reports, publications and correspondence as needed.

A graduate of the University of Cincinnati with a BA in English, Jane has been in public relations, development and communications for many years working in schools, hospitals and for non-profit organizations both in Cincinnati and New Jersey. Earlier in her career she worked in the for-profit world and was the first female department head and Manager of Public and Consumer Relations for The Drackett Company, a Cincinnati-based division of Bristol-Myers which for many years made Drano, Windex and other household cleaning products. Jane also owned a public relations and special events business and coordinated many city-wide events in Cincinnati. She is married to Mike, a retired market researcher, and has 2 adult children and 2 young grandchildren. Jane enjoys reading, traveling, photography, volunteering, serving as a sacristan at her church, and spending time with family and friends.

"I am very proud to work with such an outstanding organization as the AMAA with so many dedicated employees and such an important mission," said Jane. "Working at the AMAA has opened my eyes and my heart to the tremendous need in other parts of the world and has strengthened my faith by all the good that is being done by the AMAA to meet that need."





Central High School Alumni Association Holds 30th Anniversary Banquet

On Friday, March 6, 2020, the Central High School Alumni Association celebrated its founding 30 years ago at the Anoush, Glenoaks Ballroom in Glendale, CA. Nearly 170 alumni, friends and guests of the Armenian Evangelical Central High School in Beirut, Lebanon, came together from near and far. Present were a number of notable dignitaries and leaders of the community, including Dr. Nazareth Darakjian, President of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA), Zaven Khanjian, AMAA Executive Director/CEO, and Dr. Hasmig Baran, Chairperson of the Board of Haigazian University.

After a warm welcome by Mary Konyalian, Mistress of Ceremonies, the Banquet began with the American and Armenian anthems by Ara Kourouyan and Raffi Kerbabian. The Invocation followed by Rev. Daniel Albarian, with words of comfort and blessings.

The current Chairperson of the Association, Dr. Hagop Der-Karabetian, in his remarks acknowledged the dedication and service of many alumni and friends who had served on the Committee in various capacities, past and present. He mentioned the names of the founding members, many of whom were present, including Gabriel Albarian and Sahag Shamlan, for their vision and leadership in starting the Association 30 years ago. He thanked all individuals and organizations that have continued to support the School throughout the decades on good days, and not-so-good days, as at the

present time. He noted that in addition to the Alumni Association the School continues to receive generous support from the AMAA, and the Jerry and Pat Turpanjian Educational Foundation as Grand Benefactors.

Mr. Khanjian expressed the continuing commitment of AMAA to support Central High School, as well as the Christian-Armenian education of Armenian students and educational institutions inside and outside of Armenia.

Mr. and Mrs. Vahe and Sara Anti-kadjan were honored with an appreciation plaque for their generous sponsorship of the Banquet, and for their continuing support of the School over the years. Mrs. Anti-kadjan was also honored with a plaque as the Alumnus of the Year for her many years of dedicated service on the Committee.

Maral Deyirmendjian, Principal of the School, who had traveled from Beirut, gave her message of gratitude and hope under the prevailing difficult conditions of the country. She reported that the number of students in the current academic year was 337. A great majority of them receive substantial financial grants. With much pride, she mentioned the many accomplishments of the students, including the first-place championship in VEX 3 Robotic competition on February 22, 2020, out of 15 participating

schools. She also hinted at the preparations for the coming Centennial celebrations of the School's founding in 1922. She then presented the Committee with a beautifully designed 30th Anniversary trophy prepared by Garbis Deyirmendjian.

The Banquet concluded with musical entertainment by Sebouh Nadjarian, and DJ Naro. The food was plentiful and delicious, and the spirit to CARE FOR CHS was strong and enduring. □



The Antikadjian Family.



Central High School Alumni Association Committee Chairs with Principal Maral Deyirmendjian, third from left.



AMAA Executive Director/CEO Zaven Khanjian.



Current Committee and Founding members of the Alumni Association pose with the 30th Anniversary Cake at the Banquet.

Rev. Haroutune Selimian's Pastoral Visit to Germany

At the invitation of Prelate Dr. Martin Dutzmann and Rev. Enno Haaks, the General Secretary of Gustav-Adolf-Werk (GAW), Rev. Haroutune Selimian, President of the Armenian Evangelical Community in Syria, was invited to spend the first week of March 2020 in Germany. Rev. Selimian made several presentations in five cities of Germany (Stuttgart, Hanau, Bad Homburg, Hamburg, and Berlin) about the current situation in Syria and the challenges facing Christians. During his stay in Germany, he was also interviewed by local and church affiliated media agencies. In all his presentations Rev. Selimian stressed that "Reconstruction would support stabilization in Syrian society."



On March 8, at the conclusion of his visit, Rev. Selimian took part in the Worship Service in the main Cathedral of Berlin, where he spoke about the state of the Syrians, especially in Aleppo city under the



current turmoil. Together with Prelate Dr. Martin Dutzmann and Cathedral Pastor Michael Kösling, he administered Holy Communion and offered the Benediction in Arabic and Armenian languages. □

AMAA Executive Director/CEO Zaven Khanjian's Video Message to Lebanese-Armenians ԱՅԱՀ-ի Գործադիր Տնօրին Զավեն Խանջյանի Խոսքը՝ Լիբանանահայութեան

On May 5, 2020, Zaven Khanjian, Executive Director/CEO of the AMAA, gave a short, supportive and encouraging video message to the Lebanese-Armenians, taking into consideration Lebanon's acute economic crisis as well as the community's tribulations due to the current coronavirus outbreak.

The following is Mr. Khanjian's Message:

On behalf of the Armenian Missionary Association of America, I greet the Lebanese-Armenian Community of Lebanon that has been the heartbeat of Diaspora Armenians for decades.

We are aware of the pain that you endure due to the economic crisis and from the coronavirus outbreak. Loyal to the Centennial mission of the AMAA and following the example of Christ, we continue to support the well-being and vitality of the people and institutions of the Lebanese-Armenian Community.

With a commitment anchored in the pillars of faith, we believe as Armenians with Phoenician character, that we will entrust this crisis to the pages of history and restore the good and exemplary image of Lebanese-Armenians as the progressive Community of the Diaspora.

May the Good Lord be with you, dear compatriots.

Երեքշաբթի, Մայիս 5, 2020-ին, Ամերիկայի Դայ Ալետարանչական Ընկերակցութեան Գործադիր Տնօրին Զաւեն Խանճեան կարծ տեսանիւթեով իր գօրակցական ու քաջալերական խօսքը ուղղեց Լիբանանահյութեան՝ Նկատի ունենալով երկրին տնտեսական սուր տագնապը, ինչպէս նաև թագաժարի համաճարակի հետեւանքով զաղութին ապրած տուայտանքը:

Ստորև կր ներկայացնեմ Պր. Խանճեանի պատգամը:

Ամերիկայի Դայ Աւետարանչական Ընկերակցութեան անունով կ'ողջունեմ տասնամեակներ շարունակ սիրութահայութեան բարախող սիրտը հանդիսացող Լիբանանահայութիւնը՝ գաղութի էութիւնը կազմող ամեն մեկ հարազատ գաւամուր:

Մենք գիտակից ենք տնտեսական սուր տագնապի եւ թագածահրի համաճարակի հետեւանքը եղող գաղութի ապրած տուայտանքին, մօսէն կը հետեւինք ամենօրեայ դժուարութիւններու եւ հաւատարիմ Աւետարանչականի հարիւրամեայ առաքելութեան, Երիստոսի օրինակով, գործնականապէս կը սատարենք ժողովուրդի եւ կառոյցներու առողջութեան եւ նեխունակութեան:

Հաւատքի սիւներու վրայ խարսխուած յանձնառութեամբ կը հաւատանք՝ թէ հայու փիւնիկեան նկարագրով, պատմութեան Էջերուն պիտի յանձնենք այս տագնաասն ալ վերականգնելու համար Սփիւքնան յառաջադէմ գաղութը թլալու Լիբանանահայութեան բարի եւ օրինակելի ոհմագիծը:

Բարիկ ուն ձեզ՝ սիրելի իառաջարկեր:

AMAA Sundays in March 2020

On Sunday, March 8, during the weekend of AMAA's Board meeting that was held in Glendale, CA, several visits were made to AMAA churches in California. AMAA President Dr. Nazareth Darakjian visited Holy Trinity Armenian Church in North Hollywood, CA and spoke during the English and Armenian services. The theme of his message was "Be anxious for nothing" based on Philippians 4:4-9. "When we bring our requests to God with thanksgiving, and regardless of how He responds to us, we will enjoy the peace of God that transcends all understanding," said Dr. Darakjian.

AMAA Executive Director/CEO Zaven Khanjian visited the First Armenian Presbyterian Church of Fresno, CA and delivered a message titled Our Mission: Faith in Action which was based on the Scripture reading James 2:14-16. AMAA Board member and Pastor of the Armenian Evangelical Church of New York, Rev. Dr. Haig Kherlopian accompanied Mr. Khanjian and delivered the English sermon.

AMAA Controller Nerses Rastguelenian visited St. Nareg Armenian Church of Montebello, CA. His theme was "Christian Life is a Battlefield (Exodus 17:8-16). "The three keys in fighting the battles are faith, prayerful life and the helping of each other of the body of Christ," said Mr. Rastguelenian.

Former AMAA West Coast Executive Director Levon Filian also visited the Armenian Evangelical Church of Hollywood, CA where he took part in the Worship Service.

On Sunday, March 15, AMAA Armenia Representative Harout Nercessian visited the First Armenian Evangelical Church of Montreal, QC, Canada, and delivered a message on Radical Generosity on Relationships.

During their visits, the AMAA representatives also updated the congregations about the various Mission and Outreach ministries of the AMAA in 24 countries around the world. □



Dr. Nazareth E. Darakjian



Zaven Khanjian



Harout Nercessian



Nerses Rastguelenian



At First Armenian Presbyterian Church of Fresno, CA. Zaven Khanjian with Keillor (Koko) and Nerses Kalayjian.



Armenian Evangelical Church of Hollywood, CA.



Rev. Dr. Haig Kherlopian

Ներկայ Եւ Գործոն

Ռուկաս 24. 13-32

Վեր. Սերգեյ Շահվերդեան*

3 իսուս իր Յարութենեն եւր հանդիպեցաւ իր աշակերտներուն տարրեր ժամանակներու եւ պարագաներու մէջ: Երբ աշակերտները խաղաղութեան պէտք ունեին, Յիսուս անոնց խաղաղութեան պարգեւեց: Երբ աշակերտները քաջալերութեան պէտք ունեին, Յիսուս անոնց խաղաղութեան պէտք ու կարիքը: Եմմաուսի ճամբուն վրայ երբ Յիսուսի երկու աշակերտները կը վերադառնային իրենց գիւղ՝ իրարու հետ խօսելով եւ վիճաբանելով, Յիսուս միացաւ անոնց ու լսեց իրենց խօսակցութիւնը: Ասոնք կ'ըստին թշ անարդարորեն Յիսուսը խաչին մատնեցին իսկ մենք յոյն ունեինք որ մեզ պիտի փրկէ: Եմմաուսի պատմութիւնը մեր այս օրերու պատմութիւնն է: Այս համաճարակի օրերուն մենք ալ զարմացած կը նայինք եւ կ'ըստնք՝ ի՞նչ եղաւ մեր ընտանիքին հետ, ի՞նչ եղաւ մեր եկեղեցին հետ: Ի՞նչ եղաւ մեր երկուն մեջ եւ ամբողջ աշխարհի մեջ: Ի՞նչ կը կատարուի ընդհանրապէս եւ ինչո՞ւ Տէրը լուր կը լսէ, ինչպէս ան կը լսէր Եմմաուսի ճանապարհի աշակերտներուն :

Ա. Երբ կը խօսի, Աստուած կը լսէ: Երբ մենք Աստուածոյ հետ կը խօսինք մեր նեղութիւններուն եւ դժուարութիւններուն մասին, մեր յուսահատութիւններուն մասին, կամ երբ կը գանգատինք տեղի ունեցող պարագաներուն մասին, Յիսուս Քրիստոս լուր կը լսէ: Աստուածոյ խօսքը լեցուն է այն մարդոց մասին որոնք նեղութեան օրը կանչած են Աստուածոյ եւ Ան փրկած է անոնց:

Բ. Երբ լուր ես, Աստուած կը խօսի: Երբ Եմմաուսի երկու աշակերտները լրեցին, Յիսուս խօսեցաւ անոնց հետ: Եւ երբ անոնք ստիպեցին որ իրենց տունը մտնե, Ան մտաւ եւ խօսեցաւ անոնց հետ: Աստուածոյ խօսքը մեզ կը քաջալերէ եւ կ'ըսէ, «Ղիա կայսած եմ դրան առջեւ ու կը բախեմ. Եթէ մեկը լսէ իմ ճայնս եւ բանայ դրաք, պիտի մտնեմ անոր քով ու պիտի ընթրեմ անոր հետ, ան ալ՝ ինծի հետ»: (Յայտ. 3. 20): Եմմաուսի աշակերտները ստիպեցին եւ ըսին որ իրենց մօտ մայ: Երբ լուր մնանք եւ լրենք Ան կը խօսի մեզ հետ, ինչպէս Սահմաներուն կ'ըսէ. «Յանդարտեցէք ու գիտցէք թէ ես Աստուած ես: Յեթանոսներուն մեջ պիտի բարձրանամ, երկիր վրայ պիտի բարձրանամ»: Սաղմոս 46. 10: Մենք դրան պէտք ունինք մեր արօրեայ կեանքին մեջ լուր մնալու որպէսզի Աստուածոյ ճայնը ճանչնանք: Որքան պէտք ունինք օրուան ընթացքին ժամանակ յատկացնելու եւ լուր մնալով մեր կեանքը շարունակելու որպէսզի Աստուածոյ ճայնը լենք: Եւ դրան Աստուածոյ ճայնը լսենք, որքան վարժուինք Աստուածոյ ճայնը լսելու մեր կեանքին մեջ, աւելի խորը պիտի ճանչնանք մեր Տէրը եւ Փրկիչը Յիսուս Քրիստոս եւ ըսենք «Տէր, դուն ես յարուցեալ Տէրը որ կենդանի ես, կը գործես, կ'ազդես, կը փոխես, կը նորոգես եւ կ'ըսես վեր կաց, լուսաւորուե, որովհետեւ լոյզը եկած է եւ Տէրոց փառքը ծագած է մեր վրայ»: Երբ Եմմաուսի աշակերտները լրեցին, Յիսուս սկսաւ անոնց հետ խօսի: Եւ անոնց աշեղը բացուեցան եւ անոնց ճանչնանք: Այս օրերուն հաւանական է կետեցիներուն: Այս պատգամը քարոզուած է Մերձաւոր Արեւելքի Յայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցիներու Միութեան Կիրակի՝ Ապրիլ 26, 2020-ի Աղուաց Պաշտամունքի:

մէջ»: Ան պատրաստ է խօսելու երբ մենք պատրաստ ըլլանք լսելու:

Գ. Երբ կը հաւատա, Աստուած կը գործէ: Մեր շուրջը կատարուող դեպքը մեզ կը մղեն, մեզի կ'օգնեն, մեզի ուղղութիւն կու տան որպէսզի հոգեւոր արթնութեան մասին մտածենք: Այս բոլոր կատարուածները իրաւեր են հոգեւոր արթնութիւն տեղի ունենալու մեր անձնական կեանքի մեջ, մեր համայնքին մեջ, մեր ժողովուրդին մեջ, մեր Եկեղեցին մեջ: Որպէս Աստուածոյ ծառաներ, որպէս Քրիստոսի աշակերտներ եւ հետեւորդներ, պէտք է ամեն մեկս արթնանքը հասարքի եւ հոգեւոր կեանքի մեջ: Եւ պէտք է աջօթնքը եւ ըսենք. «Տէր, բաց մեր աշքերը որ մարդոց ծառի պիտի չունենանք (Մարկոս 8. 24): Բաց մեր աշքերը որ քեզ նման, քու աշքերով նայինք աշխարհին: Արթնուուր մեզ եւ գօրացուր մեզ հաւատքի կեանքին մեջ: Լեցուր մեզ քու սիրովի, որպէսզի Աստուածային սիրով լեցուած առաջ երթանք եւ անիրաւութեան վրայ չ'ուրախանանք, այլ ուրախանանք ճշմարտութեան վրայ: Լեցուր մեզ այս սիրով որ միայն մեր մասին չի մտածեր»: Պէտք է նախ մեր յարաբերութիւնը Աստուածոյ հետ նորոգել եւ ապա մեր շրջապատին հետ: Փառք Աստուածոյ որ Եկեղեցի ծառայութիւնը չի սահմանափակուր Եկեղեցի չորս պատերուն մեջ: Այս ամբողջ աշխարհը մեր ասպարեզն է գործելու եւ ծառայելու: Մեր Տէրը Յիսուս նախ քան իր Երկինք համբարնալը իր աշակերտներուն ըսաւ. - «Գացէք ամբողջ աշխարհը, ու քարոզցէք աւետարանը բոլոր արարածներուն» Մարկոս. 16. 15:

Յիսուս է յարութիւնը եւ կեանքը եւ մենք ալ Եմմաուսի աշակերտներուն պէս խօսք ունենք ըսելու կենդանի եւ յարուցեալ Յիսուս Քրիստոսի մասին: Եմմաուսի աշակերտները յոյսով լեցուած նոյն ժամուն վերադրածն երուսաղէմ միւս աշակերտներուն մօտ, որովհետեւ յոյսի պատգամը ունինք ըսելու եղածին մասին: Յեթես այս օրերուն յարութիւնը կեանքը եւ մենք ալ Եմմաուսի աշակերտներուն պէս խօսի նորոգելու կեանքին մեջ, ի՞նչ յուշեր ունինք որ պէտք է նկատի ունենանք: Մերեւս այս օրերուն Աստուած մեր աղօթքի պատասխանը կու տայ: Մերեւս այս օրերուն Աստուած հրաշներ կը գործէ մեր կեաքերուն մեջ: Մերեւս Աստուած այս օրերուն յատուկ կերպով կ'այցել մեզ, որովհետեւ կ'ուզէ իր գործը նորոգել մեր մեջ, Եկեղեցին մեջ եւ ժողովուրդին մեջ: □



* Վեր. Սերգեյ Շահվերդեան Երեց հովին է իրանի Յայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցիներուն: Այս պատգամը քարոզուած է Մերձաւոր Արեւելքի Յայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցիներու Միութեան Կիրակի՝ Ապրիլ 26, 2020-ի Աղուաց Պաշտամունքի:

ԱՄԵՆ ԲԱՆԻ ԺԱՄԱՆԱԿԸ Կայ

ՉաւԵն Խանճեան

Երբ մտածեմ այս օրերու համաշխարհային թագաժամանակի պատճառած անձկութեան մասին, որ կը սպառէ մարդկային միտքն ու հոգին, եւ այս առիթը՝ որ այսօր կը հրաւիրէ մեզ յիշատակելու Յայոց Յեղասպանութեան 105ամեակը, կը մտաբերեմ իմաստութիւնը որ կը բիի Աստուծոյ խօսքն (Ժողովոյի 3) ուր կ'ըսէ.

«Ամեն բանի ատենը կայ,
Ու երկինքի տակ եղող ամեն գործի ժամանակը:
Ծնանելու ժամանակ եւ մեռնելու ժամանակ:
Լայր ժամանակ եւ ծիծաղելու ժամանակ:
Գրկելու ժամանակ ու գրկելէ հեռանալու ժամանակ:»

Ամենու վի քանի ամիսները մեր բոլորին համար եղան սպառողական, թէ՛ ֆիզիքապէս եւ թէ՛ հոգեպէս, այս ցամաքամասին վլայ, մեր Յայրենիքի մէջ եւ աշխարհի տարբեր երկիրներու մէջ, ուր այս անսախաղէա եւ անհաւատաի իրողութիւնը կլանեց ամբողջ աշխարհը՝ թելադրելով կեանքի նոր կանոններ:

Ողբերգութիւնը շօշափեի է: Մենք ականատես ենք մարդկային քրտնաշան հոգածութեան՝ հոգալ տուժածները, այաքքարի՝ անհրաժեշտ փրկարար սարքաւորումներ ձեռք բերելու, մարտնչի՝ սահմանափակելու ախտին տարածումը եւ սգալ գոհուածները, չկարենալով անոնց տալ արժանի յարգանքի վերջին տուրքն իսկ:

Միևս բիլաւորներ կ'ենքարկուին այս գարշեի եւ ահազդու պատուհասին, հազարաւոր շտապ օգնութեան ծառայողներ, բժիշկներ, բուժոյեր, պետական ծառայողներ, բարի սամարացիներ, կամաւորներ եւ ոչ պետական կազմակերպութիւններ օրն ի բուն կը խնամեն, կը բուժեն, յոյս կը ներշնչեն եւ շատ մը պարագաներու կեանք կը պարգետեն խճողուած մահիմներու վրայ գտնուող հիւանդաններու՝ ըլլան անոնց հիւանդանուններու կամ շտապ կառուցուած բժշկական սարքաւորումներու մէջ:

Յուրաքանչյուր անոնց՝ որոնք կոչումը ունին, նուիրաբերումը եւ կամ պարտաւորութիւնը իրենց օգնութեան ձեռքը երկարելու:

Յարիւր հինգ տարիներ առաջ Օսմանեան Թուրքիա կոչուած մէկ այլ ժանտախտ՝ կամսամտածուած պետական ծրագրով, ֆիզիքական ոչչացման ենթարկեց կայսրութեան ընակչութեան մէկ հատուածը: Անոնք, իրենց պապենական հողերու վրայ խաղաղութեամբ կ'ապրէին հազարաւոր տարիներէ ի վեր՝ ետին մահ եւ ոչչացում ձգող թրքական սմբակներու դէպի Մերձաւոր Արեւելք խուժումնեն շատ առաջ:

Ամեն բանի ժամանակը կայ:

Այսօր, թագաժաման այս ողբերգութեան ընդմշտէն, պարտինք կասեցնել ժամացոյցներու ընթացք, յարգելու յիշատակը եւ յարգանքի տուրք մատուցանելու մեր մէկու կես միլիոն և անադամական ամենամասն միջոցներու մանգաղուեցան եւ ոչչացան: Իր պատմական հողին վրայ ապրող մեր ժողովուրդը թիրախ դարձաւ՝ գոհացում տալու խալարի մէջ՝ պետականօրէն կազմակերպուած ոճիրի մը, որ չխանդութեց խաղաղ, բարգաւաճ, ստեղծագործ Ջրիստոնեայ փոքրամասնութեան մը գոյութիւնը՝ իր պապենական հողին վրայ:

Եսախցիկներ չկային, ականատես ըլլալու մտրակուող պարտադիր տեղահանութեան: Լրատուամիջոցներ չկային, արձագանգելու «ազգի մը սպանութիւնը»: Շտապ օգնութեան միջոցներ չկային հասնելու համար փշոտ դաշտերուն մէջ, ժայռոտ լեռնային ճանապարհներու վրայ, անապատի կիզիչ աւագին, վտանգաւոր եւ ամայացած անմշակ ճամբաններուն վրայ եւ կամ մոլու ու սարսափազող քարանձաններու մէջ, մահուան սպառնալիքին ենթարկուող տեղահան ժողովուրդին: Շտապ օգնութիւն չկար գթալու երկունքի մէջ գտնուող մօր մօր եւ կամ ոսկրացած որբ մանչուկի մը կոչին: Շտապ օգնութիւն չկար աղերսելու կաթի մը ջուր պապակող ակոսուած շրջներու եւ կամ հացի փշունք մը հայցող նօթիին: Շտապ օգնութեան կոչերու պատասխանող չեղաւ փրկելու ինեղամահ մանկամարդուի մը եւ կամ բոցերու մէջ կրակի տրուած հարս մը, որոնք ետ միած եին լրձանաշուրջն ահավելուներ:

Այսօր՝ երախտագիտութեամբ կ'ողջունենք Ամերիկայի Միացեալ Նահանգներու Գոնկրեսի կողմէ երկա՞ր սպասուած Յայոց Յեղասպանութեան ճանաչումը, անցեալ տարուայ աշխան: Բայց հակառակ թաւալող մէկ դարաշրջանին, Մեծ Ոճիրի ժառանգորդները տակաւին մահարուսի մէջ կը մսան իրենց գիտակից ուրացութեամբ:

Այսօր՝ անոնք ալ կը տառապին նոյն թագաժամանուկուութիւնը: Իմ աղօթքն ու մաղթանքն է, որ ինչպէս ամբողջ աշխարհը, գիտակից ուրացումի ռահվիրան՝ Թուրքիան, նոյնպէս ապացինի այս հիւանդութեան հետեւանքով յառաջացած աւերէն եւ հոգեվարցն եւ խաղաղութիւն գունէ:

Ամեն բանի ժամանակը կայ կ'ըսէ Աստուածաշունչը:

Այսօր ես առաջնորդուած եմ Աստուծոյ խօսքով՝ Բ. Օրինաց 32. 35 համարով, որ կ'ըսէ.- «Վրէժինսդրութիւնը իմս է, ես պիտի հատուցանեմ:»

Ամեն բանի ժամանակը կայ:

Այսօր ժամանակն է խոնարհելու եւ յարգանքի տուրքը մատուցանելու ինկածներուն՝ վերահաստատելով մեր հաւաքական ձգուումը արդարութեան: □

Տեսնուածեն Աւելի Տեսնելու Շնորհքը

(Ս. Զատիկ)

Վեր. Դոկտ. Վահան Յ. Թութիկեան*

Յսուս ըսաւ Անոր. «Դուն հաւատացիր՝ որովհետեւ տեսար զիս. երանի անոնց որ կը հաւատան առանց տեսնելու» (Յովհ. 20.29):

Իր խաչելութենեւ երեք օր յետոյ Յիսուս Յարութիւն առած էր ՄԵկշաբթի (Կիրակի) առաւտուուն եւ նոյն երեկոյ իր աշակերտուներուն երեւցած էր: Սակայն, անոնցմ մեկը, Թովմաս, այստեղ չըլլայուն՝ չհաւատաց այս զգայացունց լուրին եւ յայտարարեց. «Մինչեւ որ գամերուն հետքերը չտեսնեմ անոր ծեռքերուն մեջ ու մատներուն չինեմ գամերուն տեղերը եւ ծեռքս չդպցնեմ անոր կողին՝ չեմ հաւատար» (Յովհ. 20.5):

Թովմաս անհաւատ մեկը չէր եւ ոչ ալ սկեպտիկ մը, բայց կ'ուզեր վստահ ըլլայ, թէ իրօք քրիստոս Յարութիւն առա՞ծ էր: Կ'ուզեր իր կասկածները փարատել եւ ճշմարտութիւնը գիտնալ: Տարակոյսներ սկսան տողանցել իր մտքին մեջ: Բայց ի վերջոյ եկաւ ճակատագրական այն պահը երբ Յարուցեալ Յիսուսը երեւցաւ իրեն ալ եւ հիմնովին փոխեց իր աշխարհահայեցքն ու կեանքը: Արդարեւ, իր Յարութենեւ շաբաթ մը յետոյ, Յիսուս դարձեալ երեւցաւ իր աշակերտուներուն: Այս անզամ Թովմասն ալ այստեղ էր: Յիսուս ըսաւ Թովմասին. «Սատդ բեր, հոս դիր եւ տես ծեռքերս. բեր ծեռքը եւ դպցուր կողին եւ անհաւատ մի՛ ըլլար, այլ հաւատացեալ» (Յովհ. 20.27):

Այդ իրաշալի եւ սրտառուց պահուն Թովմաս դես յանդիման եկաւ Յիսուսի եւ բացականչեց. «Իմ Տերս ու իմ Կստուածս»: Յիսուս ըսաւ անոր. «Դուն տեսար եւ հաւատացիր. երանի անոնց որ չեն տեսած ու կը հաւատան» (Յովհ. 20.29):

Թովմասի համար տեսնելը՝ հաւատալ էր: Յիսուս իրեն հաղորդեց թէ ոչ միայն տեսնելը հաւատալ է, այլ հաւատալը ինքնին տեսնել է: Այլ խօսքով, հաւատալը կախեալ չէ տեսանելի ու շօշափելի ապացոյցներէ: Քրիստոնեական հաւատքը կախեալ չէ այն տեսակ բաներէ որոնք տեսանելի եւ շօշափելի են. չեն չափուիր, չեն կշռուիր եւ չեն վերլուծուիր գիտական բնալուծարաններու մեջ: Յաւատքը, Առաքեալին խօսքով, «յուսացուած բաներուն հաստատութիւնը ու չերեւցած բաներուն ապացոյցն է» (Եբր. 11.1):

Յիսուս երանելի կը կոչէ բոլոր անոնք, որոնք տեսնուածեն աւելի տեսնելու շնորհը ունին. Անոնք որոնք Յարութեան ապացոյցը թափուր գերեզմանեն, Յիսուսի խոցոտուած կողեն ու ծեռքերեն անդին կամ սոսկ պատմական դեպք մը ըլլայու իրականութենեն աւելի՝ անձնական փորձառութիւն մը կը համարեն:

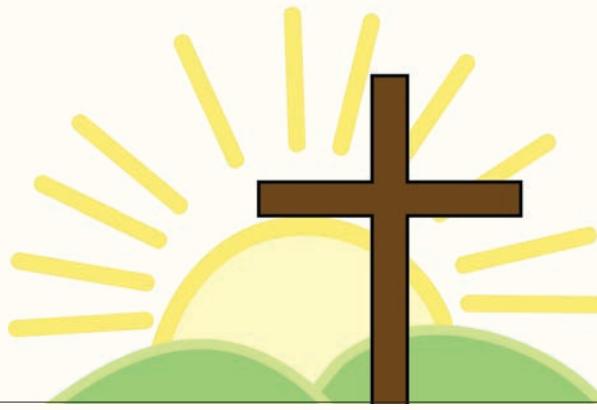
Առաջին դարուն, Պողոս Առաքեալ անոնցմ մեկն էր, որ տեսնուածեն աւելի տեսնելու շնորհը ունէր: Թեեւ Յիսուսի Յարութենեւ յետոյ զիսք չէր տեսած, սակայն Անոր Յարութիւնը զգացեր էր իր կեանքին մեջ երբ կը յայտարարեր. «Ես չեմ որ կ'ապրիմ, այլ քրիստոս ե որ կ'ապրի

իմ մեջս» (Գաղ. 2.20): Խօսելով Յարութեան գօրութեան մասին, Առաքեալը հետեւեալը կը գրէ Կողոսայի Եկեղեցւոյ հաւատացեալներուն. «Յաւատքի ճամբով երբ քրիստոսի միացաք, դուք ձեր մեղքերը թօթափեցիք... Անոր ինտ միացին թաղուցաք եւ անոր հետ յարութիւն առիք» (Կող. 2.11.12):

Քրիստոսի Յարութենեւ իվեր, շուրջ քսան դարեր, միհոնաւոր հաւատացեալներ զգացեր են Յարութեան գօրութիւնը իրենց կեանքին մեջ: Անոնք քրիստոսի հրաշաբործ Յարութեան գօրութեամբ՝ իրենց մեղքերու գերեզմանեւ յարութիւն առած՝ դարձած են քրիստոսի Յարութեան կենդանի վկաները:

Ինչպէս գիտեք, վերջին քանի մը շաբաթներուն գրեթէ համայն աշխարհ տագնապած է օրորնաժահորով (Corona pandemic): Յարիւր հազարաւոր մարդիկ վարակուած են այս մահացու հիւանդութենեւն եւ հազարաւոր մարդիկ կը մեռնին ամեն օր: Շատերու ընականոն կեանքը խախտած է: Ի տես այս ահաւոր կացութեան, շատեր մատնուած են շփոթութեան, մտատանջութեան եւ մտալիկութեան:

Որպէս քրիստոնեաներ ի՞նչպէս դիմակալելու ենք այս կացութիւնը: Բնականաբար, որպէս քրիստոնեաներ անտարբեր չենք կրնար գտնուիլ այս կացութեան մեջ: Անիրածեցն է որ իմաստուն ըլլակը կանխազգուշութեան ամեն միջոց ի գործ դնելով, եւ լրջորեն անսալով մեր ապրած վայրերու քաղաքական իշխանութեանց հրահանգներու այս համաճարակի ուղղութեամբ: Սակայն մտատանջութիւնն ու յուսաբեկութիւնը պէտք չէ անդամալուծեն մեր հոգիները: Տեսնուածեն աւելի տեսնելու շնորհը եւ Յարուցեալ քրիստոսի ներշնչած հաւատքով եւ յոյսով նայինք ապագային, քանի որ ան մեզի «ոչ թէ երկշոտութեան այլ գօրութեան, սիրոյ եւ խոհեմութեան հոգին կուտայ» (Բ. Տիմ. 1.7): Յարութեան յաղթական հոգիով շարունակենք մեր կեանքը եւ յայտարարենք ամենուն «քրիստոս յարեալ ի մեռելոց»: Օրինեալ է Յարութիւնն օրիստոսի»: □



* Վեր. Դոկտ. Վահան Յ. Թութիկեան, Գործադիր Տնօրին Ե Յայ Ալետարանական Յամաշխարհային Խորհուրդի:



In Memoriam: Aram Boolghoorjian

Aram Boolghoorjian of Pasadena, CA passed away on March 25, 2020 after a short illness. He was 95.

Aram was born on January 19, 1925 in Aleppo, Syria to Armenian Genocide survivors Hamdi Efendi and Zarouhi. Aram had a brother Dikran and sister Nevart. He lost his birth mother when he was only two months old. His father arranged for a single woman to raise him. Aram called her *Ana*, which in Turkish means Mom.

Aram had two uncles from his father's side who lived in the United States in Boston, MA. One of his uncles was a medical Doctor and the other one owned a market. Aram's uncles sent funds to Aram's family so they could live comfortably and do some business. Aram's father invested those funds to help plant wheat and cotton in Aleppo and Aram helped his father by working in the fields. One day, when Aram was on his horse, he fell and injured his shoulder. He never overcame that serious injury and his wife Anahis Jambazian Derian, a Registered Nurse, had to massage that shoulder daily to ease the pain.

Aram received his primary education in local Armenian Evangelical schools in Aleppo, but he could not afford to continue his higher education. At the age of 19, he was invited to work at a school in Kessab, Syria for a few years and in 1948, he moved back to Aleppo to teach at the Armenian Evangelical Bethel School. In 1955, when he had saved enough funds, he moved to Beirut to continue his higher education by attending Haigazian University and later the American University of Beirut.

In 1955, along with his College studies, Mr. Boolghoorjian's teaching career in Beirut started at the Armenian Evangelical College where he primarily taught Mathematics. In 1968 he was invited to become Principal of the Armenian Evangelical Secondary School of Nor Marash in Bourj Hammoud, Lebanon for six years. Rev. Berdj Djambazian, Pastor of the Armenian Evangelical Church of Nor Marash, worked closely with Mr. Boolghoorjian. Rev. Djambazian remembered Aram as "being focused on education, with many leadership qualities, strong discipline and someone who was consistent in all matters." In 1974, he was invited to become Principal of the Armenian Evangelical Central High School where he served for six years. In 1981, he moved to the United States and, after teaching a few years at Mesrobian School, in 1984 he was invited to be Principal of the C & E Merdinian Armenian Evangelical School in Sherman Oaks, CA where he served until his retirement in 1990.

Aram was married to the late Anahis Boolghoorjian and they had a son Vasken (married to Tamar) and a daughter Taline (married to Hraig Aposhian), two grandsons Aram Boolghoorjian and Nerses Aposhian and two granddaughters Natalie Boolghoorjian and Tatyana Aposhian.

In 2010, Aram married Anahis Jambazian Derian and for the past 10 years, they lived happily and peacefully in Pasadena. They were active members of the Armenian Cilicia Evangelical Church of Pasadena.

Mr. Boolghoorjian was an exceptional educator, Principal and leader and shaped so many lives during his teaching career. He will be remembered by many of his students who have become leaders in the Armenian community today. For his long and dedicated teaching career, he was honored by the LA Alumni Association of the Armenian Evangelical Secondary School of Nor Marash, LA Alumni Association of Armenian Evangelical Central High School and by Merdinian School. In 2014 the Merdinian School Auditorium was totally renovated and in honor of Mr. Boolghoorjian named **Aram and Anahis D. Boolghoorjian Hall** funded with a major donation by Anahis D. Boolghoorjian.

As a result of the current COVID-19 pandemic, a celebration of his life will be held at a later time. □



IN MEMORIAM:

Patrick Devedjian

Patrick Devedjian, a former Cabinet Minister and former President of Parisian Haut-de-Seine Administrative District, died of COVID-19, on Sunday, March 29. He was also a close adviser of former French President Nicolas Sarkozy.

Mr. Devedjian publicly announced on Twitter of his suffering of COVID-19 on March 25 saying: "I am affected by the epidemic, therefore I am able to bear witness directly to the exceptional work of doctors and nurses... I'm sending them a big thank you for their constant help to all their patients."

Mr. Devedjian was born on August 26, 1944 in Fontainebleau (Seine-et-Marne), France. His father came to France in 1919 from Sivas fleeing the Armenian Genocide. His mother, who was from Boulogne-sur-mer, died when Patrick was just six years old. Mr. Devedjian was married to Sophie Vanbremersch and they had four sons, Thomas, François, Arthur and Basil, as well as 10 grandchildren.

During his entire life, Mr. Devedjian was dedicated to the defense of the Armenian Cause. He made a tremendous contribution to France's recognition of the Armenian Genocide.

Circumstances have not allowed the Armenian people to celebrate the life of a hero who defended the Armenian Cause under the most difficult conditions and pay the rightful respect to his memory. There is a time for everything. We are confident the time will come. Meanwhile we share with you the eulogy issued by the Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches of France who walked the path parallel with Patrick in his struggle for the Armenian Cause.

With great sadness, we learned of the death of Patrick Devedjian.

His sudden departure is a shock for the entire Armenian Community, as well as for the political world.

Patrick Devedjian had a brilliant career, never forgetting his Christian and Armenian roots. He will stay as an example of excellence, commitment and loyalty to his people.

The Armenian Evangelical Church shares the pain of his family and of his Church, the Armenian Catholic Church. On the eve of the Holy Week, we pray that God will console his family in the hope of the resurrection that we have in the Resurrection of Christ.

With our most sincere and deep condolences and prayers.

Rev. Joël Mikaelian

President, Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches of France



Rouben Shougarian, Ph.D.

Dr. Rouben Shougarian, Armenia's second Emissary and first Ambassador to the United States, passed away in Boston, MA after suffering a stroke. He was 58 years old.

"It is with great sorrow we announce that our loving father and husband, Ambassador Rouben Shougarian, PhD passed away peacefully this morning in Boston, MA after suffering a stroke last week," wrote the Ambassador's son Narek on his Facebook page.

Dr. Shougarian was born in 1962. He received his higher education at Yerevan Brusov State Pedagogical University of Russian and Foreign Languages and at Yerevan State University.

He served as Armenia's Deputy Foreign Minister (1999-2005), Ambassador to Italy, Spain and Portugal (2005-2008), and Armenia's first Ambassador to the United States (1993-1999). He also served as a senior staffer for the Armenian Parliament's Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs (1991), and a senior foreign policy aide and spokesperson for President Levon Ter-Petrosian (1992). He held the rank of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Armenia.

Dr. Shougarian moved to Boston in 2008 and was a beloved Professor in Tavitian Scholars Program in Public Policy and Administration at Tufts University's Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy.

Dr. Shougarian is survived by his wife Lilit Karapetian-Shougarian and sons Narek, Tigran and Haik.



Rouben Shougarian (left) with Joseph Stein, former AMAA Board Member.

Rosanna Asadorian

Rosanna Asadorian of Fresh Meadows, NY passed away on March 17, 2020. She was 92.

Rosanna was born July 6, 1927 in Boston, MA to Garabed and Berjouhi Misirian, a family of the first Protestant Christian Armenians of Aintab, Turkey and survivors of the Armenian Genocide of 1915. The family, with daughters Rosanna and Hermine, later moved to Troy, NY.

At age two, Rosanna lost her father. In 1936, her mother remarried a recently widowed surgeon, Dr. Hovhannes Hadidian. Rosanna had a full childhood filled with art, reading, music, writing and an active church life. She was a voracious reader and at a young age, she read the entire Bible. Morning family prayers, devotionals and hymn singing were a part of her life at her beloved paternal grandparent's house where she developed her lifelong love for reading the Bible and old hymns.

In 1948, Rosanna married Harry Asadorian who was honorably discharged from the Army in 1945 and they settled down in Queens, NY where they raised three children. Their family life was filled with church activities and friends. Harry, her husband of 55 years, passed away in 2004.

She greatly appreciated her Armenian Christian heritage and tried to instill that in her children and grandchildren. For many years, she was a member of the First Presbyterian Church of Flushing, NY where she faithfully attended Ladies Bible Study.

Rosanna was a legendary cook and baker and was especially known for her welcoming and generous Armenian hospitality. She loved people and was loved. Proper, smart, strong, loyal, dependable, dignified and Christian, are words that best describe her character.

Rosanna is survived by three children, William (and Diana) Asadorian of New York, Irene (and Jerair) Panossian of California, Laura (and Dennis) Gant of Rhode Island, five grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren. She was laid to rest on March 20 at Calverton National Cemetery in Riverhead, NY. □



Zevart Bedikian

Zevart Bedikian of Glendale, CA passed away on March 5, 2020, after battling cancer for two years. She was 82.

Zevart was born March 23, 1937 in Aleppo, Syria and was the daughter of Bedros Abajian and Sion Helvajian Abajian. Her brothers were Stepan Abajian and Movses Abajian and her sister is Maral Jabrayan.

While in Syria, she attended the Bethel Armenian Evangelical School. Upon graduating from Aleppo College High School in 1955 she worked at Bethel Armenian Evangelical School as a teacher and at Bethel Church as a Sunday school teacher.

It was at Bethel Church where she met her future husband, Rev. Vahan Bedikian, who at that time served as the Pastor. They met one Sunday after church as Zevart was escorting 4-year-old Karl Doghramji to his parents the Rev. Peter and Mary Doghramji. Rev. Doghramji was the guest preacher for that Sunday and Mrs. Doghrami was Vahan's sister. That is how their story began. The young couple was engaged in 1957 and eventually married on July 28, 1958.

After the birth of their first child Varouj, they immigrated to the United States. Their second son, Ara, was born in Hartford, CT and their daughter, Lory, was born in San Francisco. The family moved around quite often, residing the longest in Cupertino, CA and then in Glendale.

Besides working to help provide for her family alongside her husband, she cooked amazing dishes for her family and when her sister and mother came from Syria to join the family, they enjoyed reminiscing and cooking up recipes from the old country.

Zevart was a highly talented woman, with a beautiful singing voice and an amazing ability to sew, design, knit and create any type of craft she wanted. She had wonderful tastes in culture and loved everything from Armenian folk songs to the ballads sung by Doris Day.

She had a beautiful smile, a great sense of humor and spunk. Even during her last years and months, no matter what she faced, including her husband's passing, she continued to stay strong. As she faced her own illness in the end, she never lost her faith in God's goodness and mercy. She



would say "God is great." The one thing that no one can dispute is her steadfast belief in prayer. No matter what was happening in the world or in her own world, she prayed fervently each night before going to bed. Hers was a faith to be envied.

She was a force in her family's life, and she will be truly missed. □

Vartan Bologyan

Vartan Bologyan, a life-long member of the Armenian Evangelical Church of Cranston, RI, passed away at his home in Cranston, RI on March 5, 2020 at the age of 91.



Born on February 16, 1929 in Gardanne, France to the late Kazar and Haiganoush Bologyan originally of Kharpert, Armenia, Vartan was the oldest of 5 children - Elise Thurber, Michel Bologyan (deceased), Louise Janigian, and Jacques Bologyan (deceased). He was a young boy during World War II and experienced occupation by the Germans in the early 1940s. Without many job options as an adult in war-torn France, Vartan decided to emigrate to the United States. After a failed first attempt in 1952, he succeeded in 1954 and settled in Providence, RI where he found steady work as a teamster until 1976.

Vartan made many Armenian friends in the Providence community, ultimately leading him to his future wife, Araxie Akiprikian. They were married on June 6, 1965. In 1967, their son Carl was born followed by daughters Lynn in 1968 and Liz in 1969. In August 1970, the family moved to Cranston where they have resided ever since. In 1977, Vartan embarked on another journey starting a career at Electric Boat in Quonset, RI until his retirement in 1996.

Vartan was very proud of his Armenian heritage but cherished his US citizenship. To him, the United States gave him everything he had wished for, so he was forever grateful to this great country for the life he had.

Vartan's devotion to his church was instilled in him by his mother, a devout Christian who grew up in orphanages operated by Armenian Evangelicals in both Syria and Greece after the Genocide. Her legacy was passed through Vartan and to his own children and grandchildren. His church bestowed Vartan the honor of Father of the Year in 2001 for his dedication and contributions to the community.

In addition to his wife and 3 children, Vartan leaves behind his daughter-in-law Rachel Abrahamian Boloyan, his sons-in-law William Tatewosian and Joseph Hathaway, 7 grandchildren, Lucine, David, and Anna Boloyan, William and Victoria Tatewosian, and Joshua and Arianna Hathaway, his siblings Elise Thurber and Louise Janigan, and many nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were held March 14 at the Armenian Evangelical Church in Cranston. Donations can be made to the Boloyan Endowment Fund at the AMAA in Vartan's memory. □

Ropovt Chorbajian, M.D.

Dr. Ropovt Chorbajian passed away April 11, 2020 due to a heart attack, surrounded by his daughters. He was 85.



Dr. Chorbajian was born on May 12, 1934 in Aleppo, Syria to Lucintak and Dimoteos Chorbajian. He had two siblings, older brother Houys, and younger brother Serop. Houys passed away at age three due to an unknown illness. Dr. Chorbajian's family moved to Lebanon when he was young, and his father was a Pastor in the town of Zgharta.

While in Zgharta, Dr. Chorbajian received his early education from a prominent missionary, Hedvig Bulle. Due to her teaching, Dr. Chorbajian was advanced two years when he attended the Armenian Evangelical Central High School in Ashrafieh. Because he was so young, they would make him stand on a stool for class pictures. After graduating from high school, he attended the American University of Beirut (AUB), where he dedicated his life to Christ. He eventually graduated from AUB Medical School at age 23. After graduation, he worked at the AUB Infirmary until he got the opportunity to volunteer as a medical missionary in Turkey, but later was denied visa because of his Armenian heritage. Dr. Chorbajian received the Lebanese Order of Merit for his volunteer work during the civil war in Lebanon in 1958. In 1967, he opened his private practice in Beirut where he practiced medicine until his retirement in 2016.

In 1976, Dr. Chorbajian married Maral Abajian. They had three children, Houys, Shaghig and Sarona. Dr. Chorbajian was a founding member of the New Armenian

Brotherhood Church of Beirut, where he served as Pastor and Chairman of the Board for over 30 years. He also served on various boards such as Karaguezian Child Welfare Corporation, Jinishian Memorial, Haigazian University, Armenian National Sanitorium, and The Bible Society of Lebanon among many other social and humanitarian agencies. Dr. Chorbajian used his medical profession to serve the people of Armenia during annual medical mission trips beginning in 1992. He also took annual trips to Syria and many other countries for evangelical crusades. Along with Maral, their home was always open to welcome guests from around the world.

In 2013, Dr. Chorbajian hesitantly settled in the United States while his wife battled cancer until she succumbed in 2017. Since his wife's passing, he spent the next two and a half years enjoying his three grandchildren, Alessia, Elias, and Julian Arka, and continued his Christian mission by evangelizing to everyone he met. □

Rachel Dohanian

Rachel (Koumrian) Dohanian of Belmont, MA passed away peacefully on April 23, 2020, just three weeks shy of her 100th birthday.



Rachel was born in Cairo, Egypt on May 16, 1920 as her parents were escaping the Armenian Genocide. With her family, she moved to Brighton, MA where she studied at Bryant and Stratton Secretarial School.

Rachel was actively involved in her church life at the Armenian Memorial Church (AMC) of Watertown, MA. She was Church Superintendent for many years and a life-long member of the AMC Choir. When the Church Choir visited her at the Armenian Nursing & Rehabilitation Center in Jamaica Plain, MA where she was staying, to celebrate Christmas, she sang along with the Choir from her wheelchair. Rachel was an Honorary Deacon for a few decades, only missing meetings these past few years due to illness. She always wanted to know what was going on at the Church and what needed to be done to make it better. She was the longest-term member of AMC, having just celebrated 73 years of membership this past October.

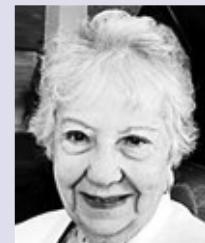
Rachel was the beloved wife of the late Armen Dohanian, Sr. Together, they were strong supporters of the AMAA. Devoted

mother of Armen Dohanian, Jr. and his wife Louise of Belmont, Phyllis Dohanian, AMAA Board member, of Belmont and the late Joyce Dohanian. Loving grandmother of Matthew Dohanian and Sherée Dunwell, Adam Dohanian and Elizabeth Jewell and Armen Dohanian, III and Paula Dohanian. Doting great-grandmother of Lily and Vera Dohanian. Dear sister of Doris Markarian and the late James Koumrian. She is also survived by her dear nieces and all the members of the Armenian Memorial Church.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic and current public safety measures, a private graveside service was held for the family. Memorial contributions may be made in her memory to the Armenian Memorial Church of Watertown, MA or to the Armen and Rachel Dohanian Fund at the AMAA. □

Seta Kalajian

Seta E. Kalajian, of Winchester, MA, one of the earliest volunteers and a long-time Treasurer of AMAA's Armenian Children's Milk Fund Program passed away on April 14, 2020 from COVID-19 related complications while at the Belmont Manor in Belmont, MA. She was 87.



Seta was born January 19, 1933 in Boston, MA to the late Noubar and Marie Nalbandian. Seta married her late husband, Michael Kalajian, Jr. of Newton, MA, in May 1954. She is survived by her son, Michael Kalajian III and his wife Sonya of Westford, MA, and her son Gary Kalajian and his wife Tami of Arlington, MA. Seta was a loving grandmother to Tyler, Taleen, Jamie and Katie. Seta is also survived by many loving cousins, nieces, nephews, and friends.

Due to current public safety precautions regarding the pandemic, a celebration of her life will be held at a later date. □

Richard (Dick) Kazanjian

Richard Kazanjian died peacefully at his Burlington, MA home surrounded by his loving family and friends on February 29, 2020.



Born on September 8, 1935 in Stoneham, MA to John and Victoria

(Derderian) Kazanjian, Dick spent his youth in Watertown and Medford, MA. After graduating from Tufts University in 1958, he proudly served as an artillery officer in the United States Marine Corps, with service aboard ship and on land in several countries. Dick and his family lived in Winchester, MA for 52 years.

Devotion is a word which described Dick's life whether to his Church, his family, or the community. Dick was a devoted member of the First Armenian Church of Belmont, MA serving as a past Chairman of the Board of Trustees and Church Moderator for many years. After the 1988 Armenian Earthquake, Dick worked to raise money for the Armenian Children's Milk Fund (AMAA). He was active in the Winchester Community as a Capital Planning Board and Town Meeting member.

Dick will be remembered as a true friend, his kind and generous nature as well as his superb BBQ skills at numerous First Armenian Church and Holy Trinity Armenian Church Bazaars, Men's Clubs, and Sunday family dinners. He loved golf and played in many benefit golf outings. Dick adored his grandsons and was a ubiquitous presence at their sporting events and other activities, enjoying every minute.

Dick leaves his loving wife of 57 years, Cynthia (Hintlian), son Rick of Chandler, AZ, daughter Andrea Krikorian and her husband Neil Krikorian, and his grandsons Vaughan and Cole Krikorian of Tyngsboro, MA. He is also survived by brother-in-law Aram Hintlian and his wife Becky, sister-in-law Nancy Hintlian (FL), and many nieces, nephews and great nieces. The eldest of five children, he was predeceased by his brother John Kazanjian, and survived by remaining siblings, Barbara Purks, (CA), and Robert and Edward Kazanjian (FL).

Funeral services were held at the First Armenian Church on March 6, followed by interment at Wildwood Cemetery, Winchester, MA. In lieu of flowers, donations may be sent to the AMAA or the First Armenian Church of Belmont. □

Mary Kouyoumdjian

Mary (Tutundjian) Kouyoumdjian of Waltham, MA passed away peacefully at home with her family by her side on April 11, 2020. She was 88 years old.

Mary was born on July 31, 1931 in Cairo,

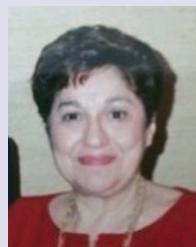


Egypt to the late Magar and Helen (Zanis) Tutundjian. Mary was the beloved wife of Onik Kouyoumdjian and is survived by her loving children Lucy Kouyoumdjian of Belmont, MA and Lily Maheu and her husband Glenn of Waltham. She was the loving grandmother of Gregory and Emily Maheu. She was the dear sister to the late Levon Tutundjian. She is also survived by her nephews, Haig and Mkrtich Tutundjian of Armenia, her sister-in-law Helen Kouyoumdjian and nieces, Sylvia Sumner and Ruth Doke and their families in California.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and current public safety measures, private graveside services were held at Mount Feake Cemetery in Waltham for her family. Memorial contributions may be made in her memory to the Armenian Children's Milk Fund through the AMAA. □

Roslyn Garoyan Monaco

Roslyn D. Garoyan Monaco "Diana" of Arlington, MA, formerly of Belmont, MA, passed away on April 23, 2020.



Roslyn was the beloved wife of the late John B. Monaco and sister of Elaine Kasparyan of Burlington, MA, former AMAA Board member and a founding member of the Armenian Children's Milk Fund, and the sister of the late Annabelle Terzian.

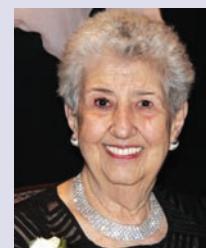
A longtime resident of Belmont, Diana attended Simmons College after graduating from Belmont High School in 1949 and embarked on a fulfilling career in fashion and management with Jordan Marsh and later Filene's. Diana's work took her around the world, a benefit for which she always expressed immense gratitude. Engaged in her community, she taught evening courses at Burdett College in Boston in addition to hosting many fundraising events for the Armenian Children's Milk Fund. In her personal time, she enjoyed visiting the beaches along Gloucester and the North Shore, spending time in her garden in Belmont, and watching old western films. Most of all, she treasured her time with her husband, close friends and family. She treated her many nieces and nephews as her own children. With every encounter, even into the later stages of life, Diana exuded a strong and palpable optimism, compassion and charisma. Her beautiful spirit touched so

many throughout her long life and she will surely be missed.

Private family services were held April 25 at Highland Cemetery in Belmont. Donations may be made in Diana's memory to the AMAA's Armenian Children's Milk Fund. □

Artemis Nazarian

Artemis Nazarian of Englewood Cliffs, NJ died on April 9, 2020 succumbing to complications of the coronavirus infection. She was 88.



Artemis was born in Aleppo, Syria on January 31, 1932 to parents of Armenian descent, Nicholas and Marie (Sulahian) Topjian. Her family emigrated to the United States in 1934 and settled in Watertown, MA where she grew up in the Great Depression among a close-knit, loving extended family.

Artemis was an outstanding student who excelled at Watertown High School. Although accepted to Radcliffe College, she went to Boston University on a scholarship and obtained her bachelor's degree cum laude; she was proud to be the first woman to graduate as an accountant from the College of Business Administration. After graduation, she worked at the firm of Haskins and Sells. During that time, she met her husband, Nazar, originally from Lebanon, whom she married in 1954. The couple settled in the New York area where Nazar established his businesses, with Artemis being his in-house accountant.

Their daughter Seta was born in 1957 and son Levon was born in 1961. Artemis was a devoted mother who raised her children with kindness, intelligence, patience, humility and a sense of purpose.

Nazar and Artemis lived in Englewood Cliffs, NJ for more than 60 years. As Nazar's businesses grew, so did his involvement in philanthropic activities. Although she did not seek recognition, Artemis was also an active philanthropist, both supporting her husband's projects as well as having many of her own including the AMAA. Her special interest in children culminated in the opening of the Artemis Nazarian Preschool of the AGBU Manoogian-Demirdjian School in Los Angeles.

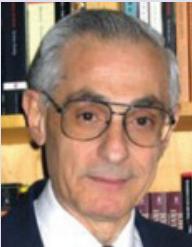
With all of her accomplishments, Artemis's greatest pride and joy was always her family, especially her grandchildren.

Artemis is survived by her husband Nazar, children, grandchildren, her beloved brother and sister-in-law Hrand Joseph and Karen Topjian as well as numerous cousins, nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by her sister Leona Boodakian in 2008.

Artemis was the epitome of gracious and selfless generosity and a perpetual shining light in the world. Her spirit will live on in all who were fortunate to have known her. □

Rev. Dr. Solomon Nigosian

Rev. Dr. Solomon Nigosian of Toronto, ON, Canada passed away on April 14, 2020 peacefully at home and on his own terms, much as he lived his life. He was 87.



Rev. Dr. Nigosian (Nigoghossian) was born on April 23, 1932, in Alexandria Egypt, to Abraham and Alice (née Kutchukian). He married Henaz Madzounian in 1952, and together they immigrated to Montreal, Canada in 1955 and then moved to Toronto in 1956.

Rev. Dr. Nigosian was the founder and the first minister of the Armenian Evangelical Church of Toronto (1960–68). He was ordained to Christian ministry by the Armenian Evangelical Union of the Eastern States and Canada in 1963 and attended Toronto Bible College (1963–64). During this time, he was actively involved in the Armenian Evangelical Union (1964–71) and served on its executive committee. He was the founder of the Canada–Armenian Press journal, for which he served as Editor from 1963–68 and wrote articles for several Armenian religious publications.

Rev. Dr. Nigosian received a BA from University of Toronto in 1968 and MA from McMaster University in 1970. He also received his Ph.D degree in 1975 from McMaster University. He was a faculty member for the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Toronto and a Research Associate for Victoria College in the University. In addition, he held two certificates related to mechanical drafting and graphic arts, as well as a Sunday School Teacher's Certificate.

Rev. Dr. Nigosian received several awards, among them the Excellence in Teaching Award from the School of Continuing Studies, University of Toronto. He was a member of many professional organiza-

tions and author of more than 100 articles and books.

Rev. Dr. Nigosian helped and touched many people in many ways and will be dearly missed by all. He was the beloved father of Levon (Donna), Diana (Collis), Papa of 4 grandchildren, Kevo (Sandi), Rafi (Yonda), Alex and Natalie and Great Papa of Dylan and Hayley. Brother of Henry (Seta) Nigoghossian, brother-in-law to Daniel (Shahan) Madzounian, Lucy Pilikian and Sonia Madzounian. A sincere and special thank you to Debbie who was a longtime family member and has been there for all the good and bad times.

He leaves behind the man that he was. □

Helen Norian/Nuyujukian

Helen (Demirjian) Norian/Nuyujukian of Arlington, MA passed away on March 28, 2020 at the age of 94 and went to be with the Lord to join her parents, husband Kevork and sisters Yeranouhi and Lucy.



Helen was born in Aleppo, Syria on February 23, 1926 to loving parents Artin and Azniv Demirjian. Her contributions to the lives of many include being a Sunday school teacher and later working as a nurse's aide at Massachusetts Eye and Ear Hospital in Boston. She was a very kind, hospitable, joy-filled woman who sang often, loved tending to her roses and always had her home open to serve others. She helped worthwhile causes like the American Cancer Society, Billy Graham Ministry and the AMAA.

Helen is survived by her sister Alice Kaleshian and brother George Demirjian, both of New Hampshire. Helen was married to her husband, the late Kevork Norian for 65 years. She is the cherished mother of Jack (Hagop) Norian and wife Julie, Richard (Vahe) Norian and wife Seta, Sylvia Mahserjian and husband Sam, and Joseph Norian and wife Christine. Very proud and much loved Grandmother of Helena, Mark, David, Sylvie, Lydia, Melanie, Talene, Lyla and Andrew. She was blessed with her great grandchildren Elias, Yezras, Zaven, Movses, Dylan, Mika and Talia.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic and current public safety measures,

a private graveside service was held at Mt. Pleasant Cemetery in Arlington. A memorial service will be held at the First Armenian Church in Belmont, MA at a later date. Memorial donations may be made in Helen's name to the AMAA and the First Armenian Church of Belmont, MA

She will be missed tremendously. May God bless her legacy and the happy memories of those who knew her. □

Vartkis Edward Parsikian

Vartkis Edward Parsikian, 85, passed away on April 8, 2020 in Reading, MA. He was 85.



Born in Boston on April 28, 1934, he was the son of the late George and Eliza (Paghtigian) Parsikian.

Vartkis was raised in Watertown, MA, and attended Watertown High School. After graduation, he began work at the Raytheon Company where he worked for 40 years until his retirement in 1992. He was drafted by the United States Army in February 1957 and served with honor for two years in Germany.

He was exceedingly proud of his Armenian heritage and family. In his younger years he was an active member of Saint James Armenian Apostolic Church in Watertown where he served on their parish council, men's club and bazaar committee.

Vartkis was the beloved husband of 63 years to the late Dorothy (Maranian) Parsikian. He leaves behind his children Joanne E. Tashjian (Greg) of Stoneham and Denise A. Molloy (James) of Middleton, grandchildren Christopher Tashjian (Kim), Joy Bethune (Michael) and Noel Talanian (Christopher), seven great-grandchildren Talia, Zack, Mya, Morgan, Celina, Mila and Charlie and many nieces, nephews, in-laws and friends.

Due to the current social challenges, a private family graveside service was held at Ridgelawn Cemetery, Watertown, MA. The family kindly asks memorial donations to be sent to the AMAA/City of Smile which benefits children with cancer in Armenia. □

Anna Sykes

Anna Sykes of La Habra, CA passed away on June 18, 2019 leaving behind a life of service to her Lord and her church. She was 95.

Born in Kessab, a small Christian Armenian village in the northern-most tip of Syria, on February 4, 1925, Anna was the second of five children born to Movses and Beatrice Mahshigian.



Despite being primarily a farm community, the people of Kessab placed great importance on education. Anna attended the British Syrian Training College in Beirut where she learned English, French and Armenian. She came to the United States to attend Biola University in Los Angeles in 1951 and she received a B.A. in Education and a Master's in Early Childhood Education. She was a teacher for 32 years.

In the 1950s, Anna began attending the First Presbyterian Church in Whittier, and became a Sunday School teacher.

It was while she was teaching Sunday School that she met her first husband, Alan Sykes, a hospital administrator from England. They married in 1960 and lived in La Habra, CA; he passed away in 1994.

That same year, Anna joined United Armenian Congregational Church, where she taught Sunday School until she was recruited by Immanuel Armenian Congregational Church to teach at their Sunday School. She was introduced to widower Harold Thomas by his Armenian neighbors, and they married in 2001. He passed away in 2015.

After Harold's death, Anna's health and macular degeneration precluded her from driving distances. Yet, with assistance, she continued to attend Immanuel Armenian Church and participated in many of its ancillary functions. In addition to teaching Sunday School, she also wrote scripts for their performances.

Anna had a generous and kind heart. In 2016, the Sunday School honored Anna with a certificate for her years of dedicated service.

Anna was buried at Rose Hills Memorial Park on July 1, 2019. She is survived by her brother Aram (Angele) Mahshigian, niece Sossie (Abraham) Poladian, nephew George (Tamar) Mashigian, niece Silva (Sam) Mncherian, and nephew Vartan (Maral) Sarmazian. □

Laurel Telfeyan Tischelman

Laurel Rose Tischelman of Woodmere, NY passed away on March 1, 2020 at the age of 70 following a long illness.



Born on February 24, 1950 in Queens, NY to parents Robert and Diana Telfeyan, Laurel was raised in Manhasset, NY and received a B.A. degree from Syracuse University and M.S. from Hofstra University. She was a long-time Board member of the Telfeyan Evangelical Fund, of which her grandfather, Albert Telfeyan, was one of the founders. She married Harold Tischelman, the love of her life, in 1989. They lived in Cedarhurst for many years and recently moved to Woodmere. Her career was as a vocational rehabilitation counselor working for the State of N.Y. and the U.S. Department of Labor.

She is survived by her beloved husband, Harold, daughter Alana, stepson Joseph Michael and his partner Summer Su, brother R. Donald Telfeyan and his partner Paula Kasher, sister Dr. Celeste Telfeyan Helvacian and her husband Dr. Nurhan Helvacian. She also leaves behind her nieces Cristina Demirdjian (John), Linda Helvacian and precious grand-nephews Lucas and Ryan Demirdjian. She was loved and will be missed by countless friends and relatives.

A memorial service was held March 15 at the Donza Funeral Home, East Rockaway, NY. □

Asdghig Tutelian

Asdghig (Shakarian) Tutelian of Sylvania Ohio passed away on March 22, 2020.



Asdghig was born in Cairo, Egypt of Armenian parents, Mr. and Mrs. Vehazoun Shakarian. She was raised in Alexandria, where she attended Armenian school and graduated from the Sacred Heart English Girls School. Asdghig came to the United States in 1956 as a student and attended Pacific Bible Institute in Fresno CA and the San Francisco Music Conservatory, later graduating from the Faculty of Music of the University of Toronto, Canada. Following graduation, she received a contract from the

Metropolitan Opera Company in New York, NY and was a chorister for three seasons. It was in New York where she met and married her future husband in 1969 and moved to Toledo.

For several years she gave several solo recitals at the Toledo Museum of Art, sang with the Toledo Symphony Orchestra, Michigan Opera Company and in several Summers opera festivals in Hamilton Ontario. Her last professional performance was in Toledo with the Westgate Dinner Theater, singing the role of Bloody Mary in South Pacific.

As her professional singing ended, she began to write, and eventually published a book about her life story entitled, "My Life's Journey." Asdghig was a very much-loved teacher at Maumee Valley Country Day School, where she taught for 35 years, giving private lessons in voice and piano to students from Kindergarten to Seniors in High School.

Asdghig was a great inspiration to family, friends and even strangers and always had a joyful outlook on life regardless of all the trials she faced. She had words of encouragement and wisdom to those who were feeling down and going through hard times. Her faith in her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ was unshakable.

Asdghig is survived by her husband, Edward Tutelian; sisters, Pailig Hanenian, Hasmig Hovsepian (Hovsep), Marie Shakarian, Elise Guekguezian (Bedros); sister in law, Anahid Tutelian, and many nieces, nephews and cousins.

A private funeral service was held in Toledo, OH. A memorial service will be held at a later date. Memorial donations in Asdghig's memory may be sent to the AMAA Orphan and Child Care Programs. □

Dr. Robert James Watson

Robert James Watson, DMD, beloved husband of Elaine Kasparian, former AMAA Board member and a founding member of the Armenian Children's Milk Fund, passed away peacefully on April 10, 2020, at Maple Ridge Memory Care in Essex Junction, VT, where he was cared for the last two months. He was 83.



Bob was born on February 23, 1937, in Barre VT, to Bob and Lucy Watson. Bob graduated from Spaulding High School in Barre, then attended Tufts University for both undergrad and dental school, graduating in 1962 with his DMD. He interned at Fletcher Allen in Burlington, VT before assuming his role as lieutenant in the Naval Dental Corps at Quonset Point Naval Station in Rhode Island. Bob completed his training in Pediatric Dentistry at Children's Hospital in Boston from 1964-1966 and then moved with his young family to Burlington to establish his first dental practice.

Dr. Bob, as he was known to his patients, colleagues and friends, was very active in the Greater Burlington community, serving as a member of Kiwanis, a lay reader at All Saints Episcopal Church, and as a member of the Ethan Allen Club. He served for many years on the Board of the Vermont State Dental Society, serving as President in 1983, and was a Fellow in the American Academy of Pediatric Dentists. He was active in the Cleft Palate Clinic of VT his entire career, helping to shape the mouths and lives of countless young people.

Bob was married to Becky Martin in 1960; they were married for 30 years and remained friends until his passing. Before retiring from Timberlane Dental Group, Bob reconnected with his Tufts University sweetheart, Elaine Kasprian. They were married in 2000, and after Bob's retirement, lived in the Greater Boston area. They loved supporting Tufts and its Learning in Retirement programs, as well as supporting Elaine's children and grandchildren in their artistic and athletic interests. While their health did

not allow them to live together once Bob's Alzheimer's progressed, they remained very close until his passing. His family members spent many precious hours with Bob taking him on road trips, walking with him, gardening, seeing Tufts play soccer and many other activities that he enjoyed.

Due to the current COVID-19 situation, a Celebration of Life will be held at a later date. □

Լուիզա Շեպեճեան

Եւ մահուան գումը հասաւ Հալեպէն: Եւ մեր սիրելի եւ ընտանիքի հարազատ Լուիզա Խապայեան-Շեպեճեանի կեանքը կը վերջանար: Բայց նուրիումի կեանք մը կը վերջանա՞յ:



Լուիզային կեանքը իրականութեան մէջ եղաւ համակ նուրիումի: Նուրիումի կեանքը ժառանգած էր իր գերթաստանէն, երբ սեռած էր ընտանիքը մը, որ հայ ժողովուրդին եւ Հայաստան եայց եկեղեցին տուած էր Կաթողիկոս: Լուիզա իր ընտանեկան աւանդին հաւատարիմ մնացած էր եւ այդպէս ապ մնաց մինչև վերջ: Եթէ նուրիումը իր անմիջական ընտանիքին, բայց նաև զարութին եւ մասնաւրարար կրթական մարզին, ուր մեծ թիւով հայ աշակերտներ դաստիարակութեան իր շունչով:

Լուիզային նուրիումի կեանքը շարունակուեացաւ երբ դարձաւ հարազատ եւ մեր ընտանիքի անդամը՝ դաւանալով կողակիցը հօրենքորս՝ Տօքք. Ռոպէր ճեպեճեանի: Հոս սկսաւ Լուիզային

կեանքին համար նուրիումի նոր հանգրուան մը: Եթէ նախ իր կողակիցին՝ հօրենքորս, ու անոր շատ մը մշակութային, գրական, մատենագիտական եւ հրապարակագրական աշխատանքներուն մէջէն, բայց նաև մեր ամրող ընտանիքին:

Տարիներու վրայ երկարած, վայելեցինք Լուիզային սէրը, հաղորդականութիւնը եւ հիւրասէր հոգին: Խապայեան-Շիշյեան-Շեպեճեան ընտանիքները բերաւ քով-քովի եւ դարձուց հայկական գեղեցիկ բոյնի մը: Իր սէրը խառնեց իր բարեկամութեան եւ հիւրասիրութեան մէջէն եւ Հալեպի մեր ընտանեկան հաւաքները դարձան յիշատակէի: Եւ այս տեսակի նուրիական կեանք մը կը վերջանա՞յ: Եթէ Փիզիքայէս այդ, բայց կայ անոր հոգին, որ արմատացած է մեր մէջ եւ նաև Հալեպի հօրենքորս «Պապենական Տան» մէջ:

Հոկտեմբեր 2019-ին հանդիպեցայ իրեն՝ Երեւան: Բաւական ժամանակ եղած էր, որ չինք հանդիպած: Շատ հաճելի էր: Ի՞նչ իմանայի, որ այդ պիտի ըլլար մեր վերջին հանդիպումը: Ֆիզիքական վերջին հանդիպումը, բայց ոչ այն որ կը մնայ: Խոկ մնացողը՝ հոգեկանը: Այդ հոգեկանին ձգած աւանդը: Լուիզային կեանքի աւանդը, որ եղաւ համակ նուրիում իր ընտանիքին, հայ դպրոցին, եւ իր շատ սիրած Հալեպին:

Թող որ այս տողերը դաշնան երախ-տագիտական խօսք՝ իր հարազանութեն, որոնք այսօր գրուած են աշխարհի ամեն կողմ: Յարգանք Լուիզային ապրած նուրիումի կեանքին: Շնորհակալ ենք Լուիզա, որ քու կեանքը բաժնեկցեցար մեր բոլորին հետ:

Ցաւակցօրէն՝
Դոկտ. Հրայր Ճեպեճեան
Քույը

Jesus said... "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?" John 11:25-26.

The AMAA Board of Directors and staff wish to extend their heartfelt condolences to the families of the following deceased friends.

Sossy Amiralian
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Avo Boymoushakian
Beirut, Lebanon

Betty Kouyoumdjian
Pasadena, CA

Fariz Muncherian
Toronto, ON, Canada

Gladys Ayvazian
Winchester, MA

*** Nerves Demirjian**
Belmont, MA

Samuel Puzant Kerbabian
St. Catherine, ON, Canada

*** Virginia V. Avedisian Salhany**
Pawtucket, RI

Janet Baghdasarian Bardakjian
Lyon, France

Vahe Donikian
South Hackensack, NJ

*** Dickranoukie Keshishian**
Farmington Hills, MI

Takouhi Sarkissian
Beirut, Lebanon

Vehanoush Bedirian
Los Angeles, CA

Anahid Ida Haroutunian
Clinton Township, MI

*** Claire Mergian**
Fair Lawn, NJ

*** Margaret Shapazian**
Selma, CA

Mary Sarmazian Bedrossian
Van Nuys, CA

*** Garo Kazanjian**
Van Nuys, CA

Alice Missirlian
Royal Oak, MI

Sonia Turnamian
Woodcliff Lake, NJ

* Memorials designated for AMAA

Veronica Mzrakian
Union City, NJ

Vahe Yervanian
Wyckoff, NJ

Pointed Reflections, by Rev. Vartkes M. Kassouni, D. Min.

By Arthur Salibian, M.D.

Pointed Reflections is Rev. Kassouni's second book, the first being Points of Life, his biography and narrative of life-time ministry.

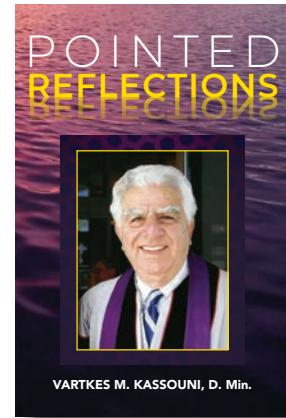
Pointed Reflections is a compilation of nearly 300 articles previously published in church newsletters during Rev. Kassouni's 53-year ministry in the Armenian Evangelical and American Presbyterian churches. These articles cover a wide range of personal, social, scientific and political topics viewed through the prism of the Bible. Of these articles, 152 are expositions of the scriptures with direct references to the Bible; they may be used for personal devotion. Rev. Kassouni's style is dialectic, poetic and to the point.

Rev. Kassouni's reflections are "pointed" in that they demand that critical interpretation of Biblical truth be carried out, to use his own words, in an "inductive, disciplined, scientific manner." In doing so, he challenges us to examine counterpoints to our beliefs and not to evade them in our response to God's Word. Rev. Kassouni uses qualities of knowledge, intellect, and reason to guide us through faith-based decisions.

Pointed Reflections represents Rev. Kassouni's theology. Foremost, it is a reform theology that has its roots in the Reformation. We are reminded that Protestantism, including the Armenian Evangelical movement, is a reform movement that needs to continue striving for changes that conform to Christ's message. Its motto is "Reformed and Always Reforming." It recognizes the freedom in Christ that breaks the shackles of dogma, does not deny friendship to foes, serves others, and respects the rights of God's creation. It is also a theology of the cross: freedom in Christ and suffering are inseparable, yet God identifies and suffers with humans and their physical world. Finally, it is a cosmic theology that reconciles not only humans but the universe in which they experience life.

The broad vision of Rev. Kassouni's articles, some of which were written 50 years ago, retains its vitality today. The book is a treasure of honed gems reflecting the Gospel light.

Copies of this book are available through the AMAA Paramus Office or at amaa.org.



He Was and Is

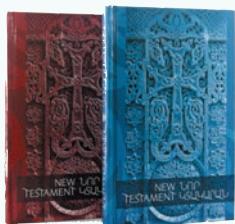
He died in our place on the cross,
 He physically rose to life, also to say we are not an albatross.
 We are unworthy, yet He saw gifts of God's image not our utter loss,
 Our calling is to accept and reflect His love in life, to all we come across.

Purpose of Life

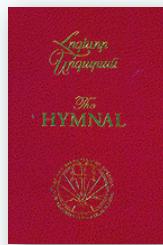
Each of us by our life write an eternal story
 The Bottom line is was it for you or His glory

By George R. Phillips, Sr.

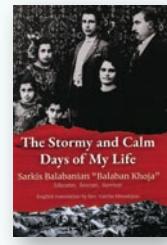
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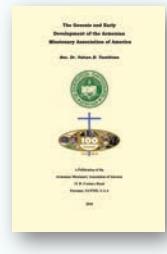
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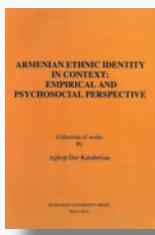
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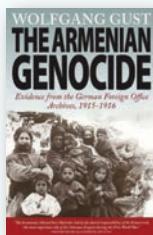
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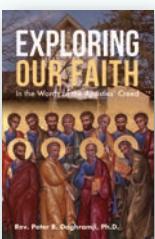
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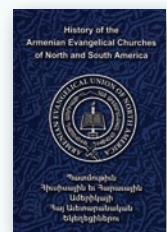
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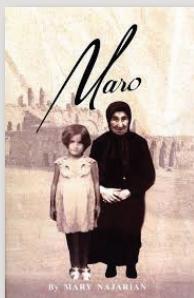
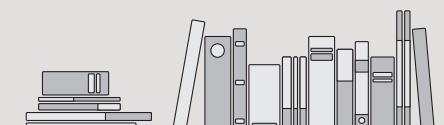


**History of the Armenian
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Ընդհակալութեամբ Ստացաւը Received With Thanks

The AMAA acknowledges with gratitude receipt of the following new publication

MARO by Mary Najarian - The Saga of a Little Girl in Aleppo. Mary Najarian's purpose for writing the book 'MARO' was to awaken the coming generations to the amazing sacrifice the Armenian Genocide survivors and refugees in Aleppo went through to build schools, churches and orphanages to survive and also safeguard their heritage.



BOOKS

ACADEMIES FOR ANATOLIA, by Frank A. Stone, *A Study of the Rationale, Program, and Impact of the Educational Institutions Sponsored by the American Board in Turkey*, 400 pp, #325\$39.99

THE ARMENIAN ANSWER TO THE ARMENIAN QUESTION, by Richard Melikian, *This book is not about the past. It is about the future*. pb #355CO\$12.00

ARMENIAN CHRISTIANITY - THE FAITH OF A NATION, by Rev. Dr. Aharon Sapsezian, *A historical look at Christianity in the Armenian culture*.pb #252\$10.00

ARMENIAN EVANGELICALS' CHALLENGE TO RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM: by Dr. Arthur Salibian. *The Growing Influence of Fundamentalism in Armenian Evangelical Churches*. pb #361\$8.00

ARMENIAN EVANGELICAL MOVEMENT - HISTORY, FAITH AND MISSION, by Rev. Barkev N. Darakjian, *The book consists of two parts: Armenian Evangelical Movement and General Articles*, 249 pp, pb #341\$15.00

THE ARMENIAN EVANGELICAL WORLD COUNCIL, by Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian, *A Bilingual Book, is the History of the Armenian Evangelical World Council from its inception in 1978 through the year 2014*. pp. 397, hc #CO356\$35.00

BLESSINGS IN BITTER CUPS, by Rev. Dr. Giragos Choupourian. *A triumphant story of a small clan of successful working class Armenians living in Turkey just prior to World War I*. hc #305\$20.00

A CENTURY OF ARMENIAN PROTESTANTISM (1846-1946), by Leon Arpee. *The history of the Armenian Evangelical movement from its beginning to 1946*. hc #365\$15.00

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IN OTHER WORDS, by Rev. Dr. Peter Doghramji. *A variety of selected sermons*. pb #310\$20.00

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WHISPER OF THE ROOTS - Արմատներու Մրուցք, by Rev. Vatche Ekmekjian. *A bilingual book (Armenian and English) presents the surviving Armenian Evangelical Sanctuaries and Build-*

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A group from the Armenian Evangelical Church of Iran at a women's gathering in the early 1970s with Rev. Nerses Khachadourian (standing in the middle).